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1569-1580

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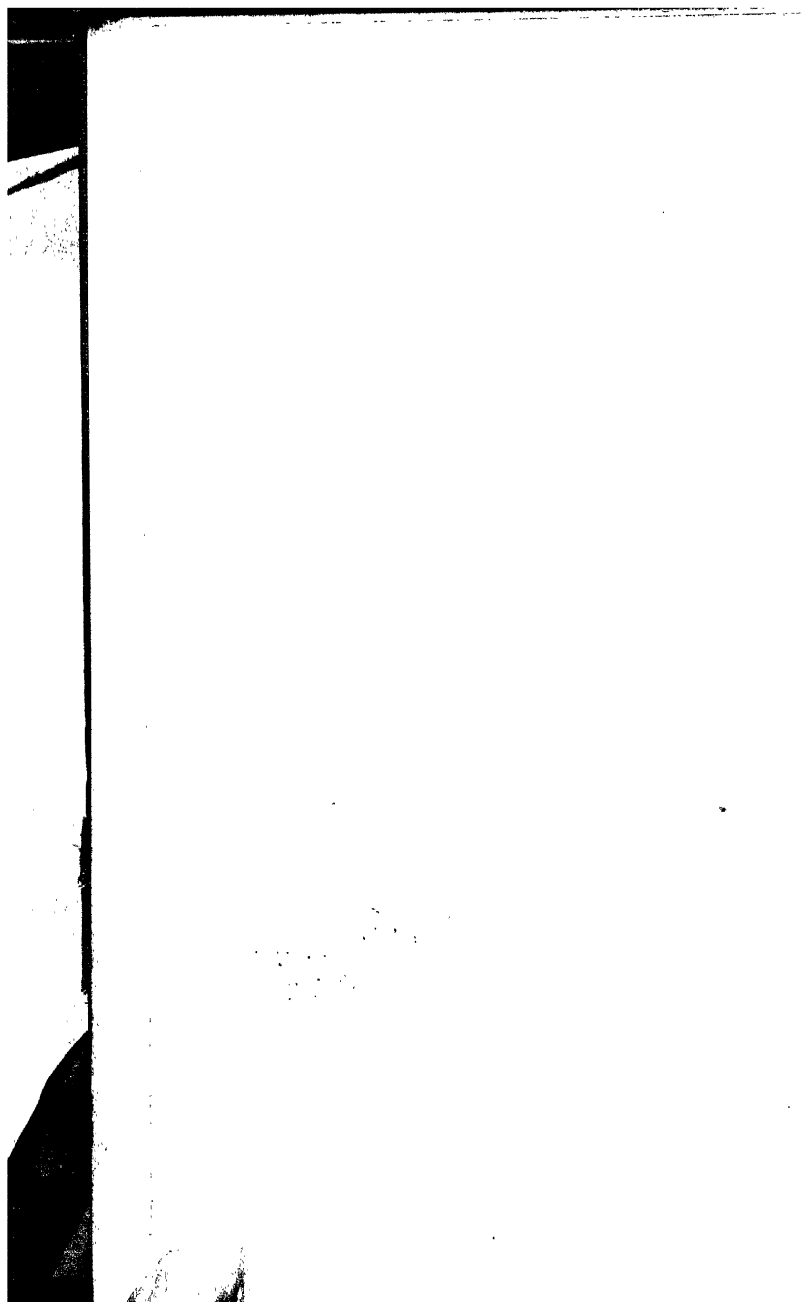
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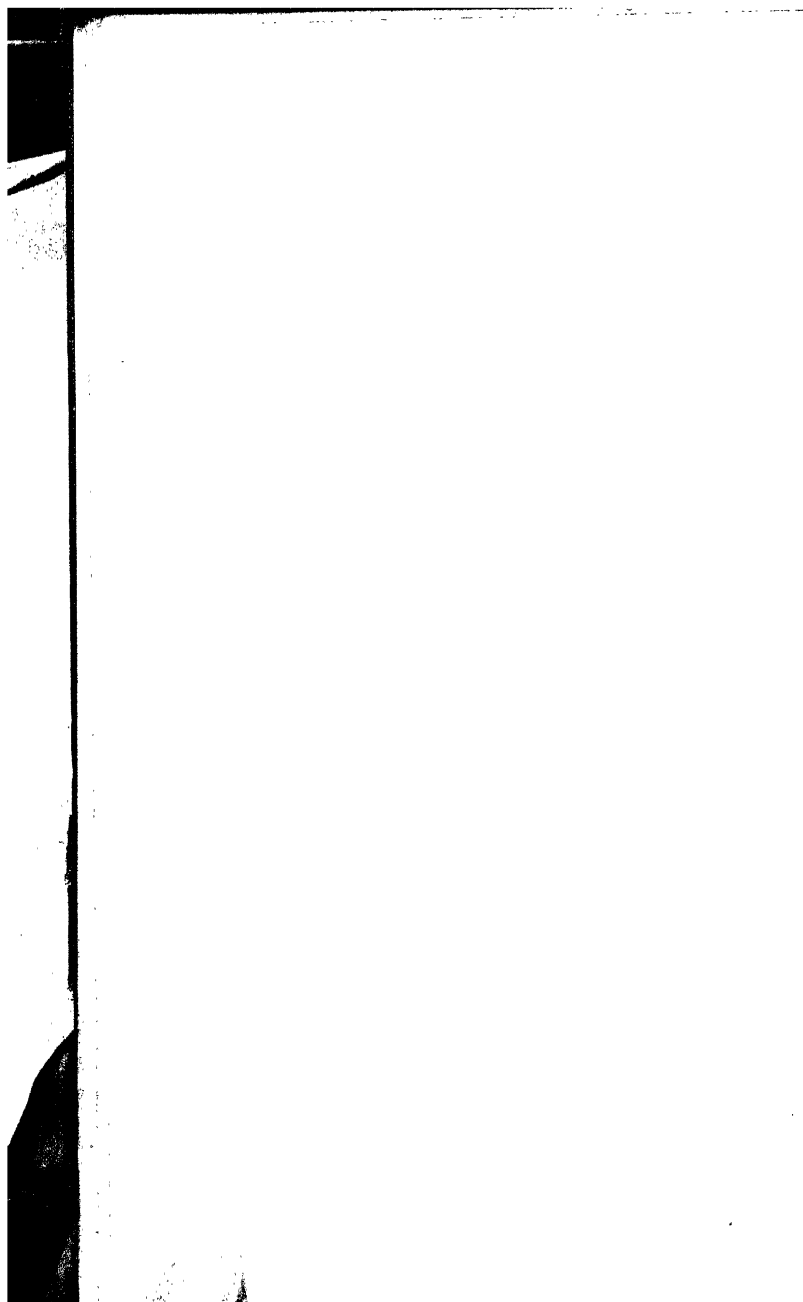
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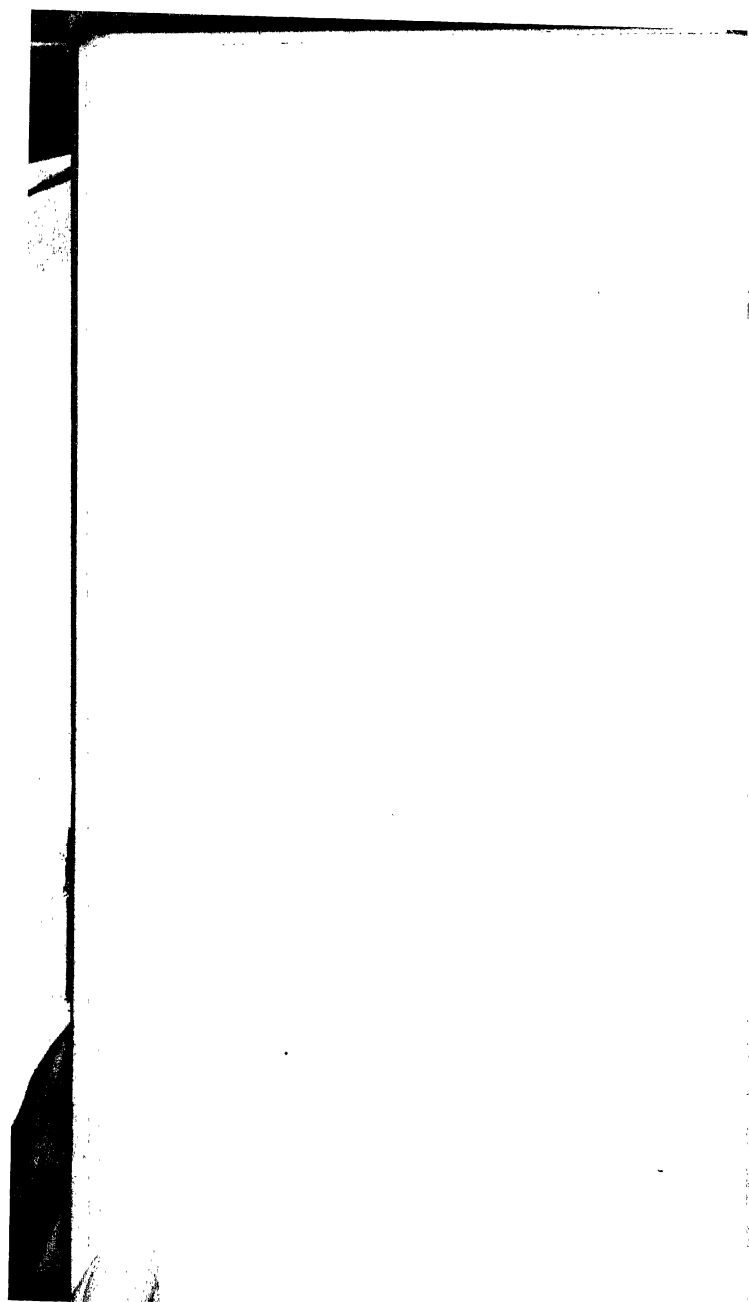
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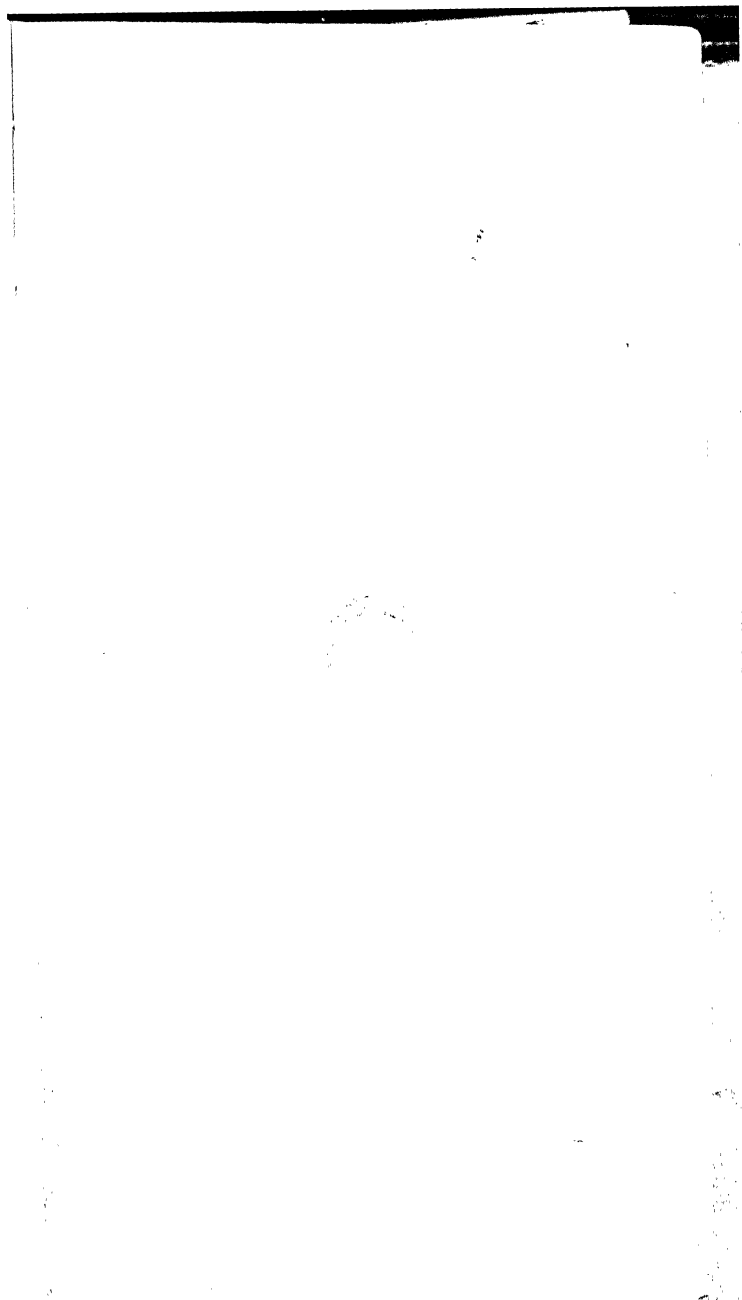
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PHILIP II. OF SPAIN

*Portrait attributed to Sofonisba Anguisciola  
in the National Portrait Gallery, London.*

15350

DOCUMENTS  
CONCERNING ENGLISH VOYAGES  
TO THE SPANISH MAIN  
1569-1580

I  
*SPANISH DOCUMENTS*  
SELECTED FROM THE ARCHIVES OF  
THE INDIES AT SEVILLE

II  
*ENGLISH ACCOUNTS*  
"SIR FRANCIS DRAKE REVIVED"  
AND OTHERS, REPRINTED

BY  
I. A. WRIGHT, B.A., F.R.Hist.S.

COMENDADORA, ORDER OF ALFONSO XII  
FELLOW OF THE DUTCH ROYAL  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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## PREFACE

THIS book is complementary to the Hakluyt Society's No. LXII, Second Series, *Spanish Documents concerning English Voyages to the Caribbean, 1527-1568*. Those of the present volume carry the story forward, through Oxenham's disastrous expedition, to 1580.

Of these Spanish documents little need be said, since they speak eloquently for themselves. The originals are in good condition and in good custody, in the General Archives of the Indies at Seville, Spain.

To make them more intelligible, an outline map of the Main (and Antilles) is included, at the end of the book. Places mentioned in the text of the volume will be found upon that map; and therefore notes explanatory of them have been omitted, as superfluous. Further, opposite p. 46, is a map which shows the lie of the isthmus on a somewhat larger scale, whereon the student may follow Drake's route to Venta Cruces and Oxenham's to Vallano.

To supplement these Spanish accounts of the various English enterprises there are presented, in Part II, the most interesting available English versions of the same matters. Chief of these (No. 1) is a remarkable work (*Sir Francis Drake Revived*), the full title of which sets forth its origin and its purpose. On that title page<sup>1</sup> it is stated that this truly "Memorable Relation of . . . Rare occurrences" was compiled by Philip Nichols, preacher, from the reports of Drake's first independent voyage furnished by certain participants in it; and it is there further asserted that the text was "Reviewed by Sir Francis Drake himself before his death, and much holpen and enlarged by divers Notes with his owne hand here and there Inserted." The finished work was proffered to Charles I by Drake's nephew, who in the volume (first

<sup>1</sup> p. 245, *post*.



printed in 1626<sup>1</sup>) included an earlier dedicatory epistle addressed to Elizabeth, dated January 1, 1592, which purports to have been written by Sir Francis himself. Therein Drake claims credit for the entire composition, the book being, he says, the "first fruites" of his unaccustomed pen. Further critical study, which the work merits, may determine whether or not the preacher's text, based on Seely's and Hixon's relations, was indeed so "much holpen and enlarged . . . with his owne hand" that we may consider Drake to be the author of it. For my part, I incline to think that he claimed the book with as much justification as pride.

Doubtless because it is lively and colourful, not only the authenticity but also the veracity of *Sir Francis Drake Revived* has been questioned<sup>2</sup>. It must surely be recognized that the contemporary Spanish documents herewith published (Nos. 17-28, 30, 31) establish its validity beyond cavil. To be sure, the English were not always well informed concerning the Spaniards' customs, strength, movements and intentions; and the Spaniards were equally ignorant concerning those of the English. Be this as it may, the reader is invited to study the story of Drake's attack on the pack-train at Campos River, Nombre de Dios (April, 1573), as told in *Sir Francis Drake Revived* and corroborated in Documents Nos. 24, 31, etc., and ask himself whether he can reasonably doubt that the event occurred as the book relates; and, finally, whether in any work of fiction (classic or "thriller") he has read anything to surpass this tale, in diversity of incident, in vividness of description, or in the portrayal of character.

Whether Drake was writing to attract approbation and recruits to his last voyage (as well he may have been), or, as he says in the dedication to the queen, "that posteritie be

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Bourne, who printed the first edition, issued a second in 1628, the text of which was used in the present work. The book was reprinted in 1653 (November 8, 1652) as part first of "a summary and true relation of four several voyages made by the said Sir Francis Drake to the West Indies." These editions are all available in the North Library of the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, by both Froude and Fernandez Duro. However, see Corbett, Sir Julian, *Drake and the Tudor Navy*, Longmans, London, 1912, I, p. 401.

not deprived of such helpe," certainly *Sir Francis Drake Revived* deserves a permanent and honoured place among the very best records of those amazing 16th-century adventures out of which grew the sea-power of England.

Item No. 2 of Part II is the better of Hakluyt's two accounts of Oxenham's expedition, both of which seem to have been drawn from the same original, credited to a Portuguese pilot called Lopez Vaz. This may possibly be the Antonio Vaez mentioned in Document No. 29. It will be observed that his relation is based upon no first-hand knowledge of the events it describes. While far less valuable as a source for history than the Spanish documents of this collection, Nos. 36 *et seq.*, it is nevertheless of interest, if only because it is all that his compatriots have known of Oxenham and his men from the time they left Plymouth in 1576 until the appearance of this present book in the year of grace 1932, three and a half centuries later.

Item No. 3 of Part II, Hakluyt's account of Barker's expedition, is similarly reprinted for the student's convenience in comparing it with these Spanish documents which correct and supplement it.

Item No. 4, from Richard Hawkins's well-known *Observations*, is appended not for its historical import but because it is curious, and quite properly closes our volume on a high note of morality, in a manner which would have won the approval of those persons whose exploits are here set forth.

For encouragement and very material assistance in the work of preparing this publication I am much indebted to the Hakluyt Society's president, Sir William Foster, to its secretary, Mr Edward Lynam, and to Dr James A. Williamson. By his invaluable criticism of the work made from the English point of view, Dr Williamson has helped me to keep my balance, as it were.

Finally, repeated thanks are due to Sr. Don Cristóbal Bermudez Plata, chief of the Archives of the Indies, who has established and maintains excellent working conditions in that great institution; and to his staff, particularly its humbler members, the *ordenanzas*, whose backs must have ached,

often, from carrying bales of papers back and forth between my desk and the shelves.

The preceding volume of similar Spanish documents was of service to British writers (according to their acknowledgments and to press comments). It is hoped that this volume may be of use to even more of them; but the editor would feel still better repaid for the labour which has gone into this book were such students to come to Spain, especially to Seville, to delve for themselves into the great collections of Spanish state papers, where so much bearing directly upon British history remains unknown. Facilities for travel to and in Spain, present living conditions here, the character of Spain's archivists (in any event, those at Seville), have invalidated any excuse which might be advanced on behalf of British historians for failure to consult Spanish sources for any work on any topic in history to which Spain was the party of the other part.

It is hoped to follow this volume, in due season, with another, presenting later documents of the same sort. There is no end to the material available at Seville alone, to say nothing of Madrid and Simancas, where unquestionably more is to be had.

IRENE A. WRIGHT

SEVILLE 1931

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	<i>page xv</i>
------------------------	----------------

### PART I

Doc.		
	1. Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569 . . . . .	3
	2. An Account of what two Seamen relate (after June, 1569(?)) . . . . .	5
	3. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569 . . . . .	7
	4. Licentiate Carasa to the Crown, Panama, March 27, 1570 . . . . .	9
	5. English Corsairs to certain Spaniards, the Main, February(?), 1571 . . . . .	10
	6. Doña Juana de Estrada and Luis de Soto, Depositions, Nombre de Dios, March 1, 1571 . . . . .	12
	7. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571 . . . . .	16
	8. Diego Flores de Valdés to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, March 16, 1571 . . . . .	18
	9. Interrogatory presented at Nombre de Dios, May 15, 1571 . . . . .	20
	10. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 20, 1571 . . . . .	25
	11. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 21, 1571 . . . . .	27
	12. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 24, 1571 . . . . .	29
	13. The City of Panama to the Crown, May 25, 1571 . . . . .	31
	14. Diego Mazariegos to the Crown, Coro, October 29, 1571 . . . . .	36
	15. Sancho Pardo Osorio to Licentiate Ovando, Havana, May 24, 1572 . . . . .	37
	16. Sancho Pardo Osorio to the President and Officials of the House of Trade, Havana, May 25, 1572 . . . . .	39

Doc.	
17. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, September 12, 1572 . . . . .	page 40
18. Martin de Mendoza, Interrogatory and Depositions, Cartagena, December 9, 1572 . . . . .	42
19. Diego Flores de Valdés to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 20, 1573 . . . . .	44
20. Pedro de Ortega Valencia to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 22, 1573 . . . . .	46
21. Municipal Council of Panama to the Crown, February 24, 1573 . . . . .	48
22. Miguel Ordoño to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 26, 1573 . . . . .	52
23. Jorge Nuñez de Prado, his Services, Depositions made at Panama, April, 1573 . . . . .	54
24. Cristóbal Monte to... (Nombre de Dios, very early in May, 1573) . . . . .	60
25. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 4, 1573 . . . . .	63
26. Royal Officials of Panama to the Crown, May 9, 1573 . . . . .	68
27. Royal Officials of Nombre de Dios to the Crown, May 13, 1573 . . . . .	71
28. The City of Nombre de Dios to the Crown, May 14, 1573 . . . . .	72
29. Dr Villalobos to the Crown, Guatemala, May 15, 1573 . . . . .	74
30. Juan Bautista Manuel and Alvaro Flores, Depositions, Seville, September 28-October 6, 1573 . . . . .	76
31. Diego Calderon, his Services, Depositions made at Panama, April 22, 1574 . . . . .	81
32. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, September 22, 1574 . . . . .	93
33. Pedro Godinez Osorio to the Crown, Veragua, April 3, 1575 . . . . .	94
34. Don Diego de Herrera to the Crown, Puerto de Caballos, April 4, 1575 . . . . .	96
35. Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, May 20, 1575 . . . . .	97
36. Pedro Godinez Osorio to the Crown, Veragua, March 22, 1577 . . . . .	100
37. "Papers of Captain Francisco de Acles, Englishman [John Barker]," 1577 . . . . .	102

# CONTENTS

xiii

Doc.	
38.	The City of Panama to the Crown, April 15, 1577 page 109
39.	Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, April 17, 1577 . . . . . 115
40.	Diego de Sotomayor, Deposition, Panama, April 17, 1577 . . . . . 117
41.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, April 26, 1577 123
42.	The City of Panama to the Crown, April 26, 1577 . 132
43.	<i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 1, 1577 . . . . . 136
44.	Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 7, 1577 . . . . . 142
45.	The City of Panama to the Viceroy of Peru, June 7, 1577 . . . . . 144
46.	Doctor Loarte to [the Viceroy of Peru], Panama, June 8, 1577 . . . . . 148
47.	Domingo Felix to Francisco Recio, Cartagena, July 15, 1577 . . . . . 153
48.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Panama, July 28, 1577 . . . . . 154
49.	Doctor Salcedo Nieto to Juan Rubio, Panama, August 4, 1577 . . . . . 158
50.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, September 5, 1577 . . . . . 159
51.	Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, October 15, 1577 . . . . . 166
52.	John Oxenham, Deposition, made at Vallano, October 20, 1577 . . . . . 169
53.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Vallano, October 21, 1577 . . . . . 178
54.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, October 24, 1577 . . . . . 184
55.	Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, October 26, 1577 . . . . . 187
56.	Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, October 31, 1577 . . . . . 191
57.	Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the Crown, Carta- gena, November 21, 1577 . . . . . 192
58.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Vallano, December 7, 1577 . . . . . 194

Doc.	
59. Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, December 29, 1577 . . . . .	page 196
60. Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, January 7, 1578 . . . . .	198
61. Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, San Miguel de Vallano, February 18, 1578 . . . . .	200
62. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, February 22, 1578 . . . . .	203
63. Carlos de Maluenda to the Crown, Panama, February 23, 1578 . . . . .	205
64. Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the Crown, Cartagena, March 13, 1578 . . . . .	207
65. Alonso de Contreras Guevara to the Crown, San Juan de Puerto de Caballos, April 12, 1578 . . . . .	208
66. Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, May 12, 1578 . . . . .	211
67. Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Panama, May 15, 1578 . . . . .	215
68. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, May 21, 1578 . . . . .	220
69. Pedro de Arana to the Crown, Panama, May 21, 1578 . . . . .	223
70. John Oxenham, Deposition, Panama, July 7, 1578 . . . . .	232
71. Doctor Diego de Villanueva Zapata to the Crown, Panama, October 2, 1579 . . . . .	235
72. Licentiate Cepeda to the Crown, Panama, May 22, 1580 . . . . .	236
73. Pedro Gonzalez de Meseta to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 3, 1580. Enclosure, Pedro and the <i>zambigo</i> , Statement, January 13 [1580] . . . . .	238

## PART II

I. <i>Sir Francis Drake Revived</i> . . . . .	245
II. <i>The Voyage of John Oxnam (Oxenham) of Plimmouth.</i> . . . .	327
III. <i>The Voyage of Master Andrew Barker of Bristol.</i> . . . .	333
IV. <i>Sir R. Hawkins, his Observations.</i> (Extract) . . . . .	339
INDEX . . . . .	343

## ILLUSTRATION AND MAPS

Portrait of Philip II of Spain, attributed to Sofonisba Anguisciola ( <i>National Portrait Gallery, London</i> ) . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Map of the Isthmus of Panama . . . . .	face p. 46
Map of the Antilles and Central America . . . . .	at end

## INTRODUCTION

IT was as explorers that the English first presented themselves in Spain's Indies, in 1527, although even then they were probably not averse from trade<sup>1</sup>. It was as business men that they returned, in 1562, their sole object being profit. To obtain profit, if for no other reason, they desired to trade peaceably. Because (his Catholic majesty's laws and the Roman church's prohibitions to the contrary notwithstanding) Spanish colonials on the islands and along the Main were eager to do business with them, peace prevailed (sometimes under the fiction of hostilities) and trade thrived<sup>2</sup> between these colonials and men who, like John Hawkins, were corsairs in the sense in which that word was used in his time, i.e. to mean illicit trader or contrabandist.

However, distinct from the Hawkinses and their kind, there were other English (individuals and groups) to whose character and convictions events in England, in Europe, and in America itself, were making friendly intercourse with Spanish papists increasingly distasteful. They voyaged, or financed voyages,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Society's publication No. LXII, Second Series, *English Voyages to the Caribbean, 1527-1568*.

<sup>2</sup> The situation is lucidly summarized in a "memorandum of matters relating to revenues in the Indies," preserved in *A. de I.* 140-7-32, and endorsed: "Drawn up in the Council for Indies and approved by his majesty." On p. 3 "vessels and fleets of corsairs which sail the Indies course" are considered to represent a loss in revenues. "They say they carry merchandise and products from England, France and other parts, and sell and barter these to his majesty's subjects at lower prices than those prevailing for goods from Seville, wherefore they are well received and covered by these subjects. As return cargoes the foreigners carry home gold and silver and *en route* do what harm and damage they are able, and they report on the land and on the sea routes. They and others are developing an appetite for such business and profits, and because they are avaricious, fond of money, and possess such resources in ships, cordage, seamen, pilots and all else necessary for the voyage, unless a remedy be applied betimes this evil, which is great, will augment daily."



to the Indies for profit, to be sure, but they were no longer particular, as John Hawkins had been, to give value for value obtained. After Pedro Menéndez de Avilés had eliminated the French from Florida (especially from 1567 on), the English sailed the Caribbean and along the Main in company with formidable Huguenot captains whose professed object was adequate as well as profitable revenge. After 1568 the English had scores of their own to settle, and from 1569 forward their activities constitute the third phase of Anglo-Spanish relations in the West Indies, which was war (*guerre de course*), waged through seventeen years in which neither Elizabeth nor Philip saw fit to recognize it for what it was (1569-86).

After 1568, in close association with men like Jean Bontemps, Captain Le Testu, possibly even with Dominique de Gourges<sup>1</sup>, and later (1572 and thereafter) on their own account, relegating business to a secondary place, with heavy hand these English took from Spaniards in the Indies "recompence" and "amends" for "losse" and "wrongs" received<sup>2</sup>. Hawkins had sought to establish permanent business relations, and would have preferred that they should be legitimate; to be "revenged for injury<sup>3</sup>" to themselves,

<sup>1</sup> Governor Pedro Ponce de Leon (to the crown, Coro, December 15, 1567, in *A. de I.* 54-4-15, Santo Domingo 193) states that they were French and Scotch who burned Borburata in revenge for Ribaut's death. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 45, affords details of the methods, but not the identity, of these avengers.

Counsel for the crown, in pressing for prosecution of soldiers accused of deserting Fort San Mateo (near the present-day Jacksonville, Florida) when Dominique de Gourges attacked in 1568, states that the assailants were French and English. Cf. the *fiscal's* memorial, *A. de I.* 54-5-16, Santo Domingo 231, 7. Very possibly these are two references to one and the same expedition.

Cf. *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 277, Guerau de Spes to the crown, London, September 11, 1570, reference to La Rochelle and especially to Jolis and his English crew.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Corbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 147-8. "The laconic statement of the family narrative" concerning Drake's motives (and observe the frank wording of the third line of its very title!) sounds more convincing, with Spanish state papers in view, than does Sir Julian's elaboration of national policies behind him.

<sup>3</sup> "... (Hawkins) asserts that he will be revenged for the injury the Spaniards have done him"—Guerau de Spes to the crown, London, July 1, 1570, in *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 258.

to their fellow-countrymen or co-religionists, to humiliate their enemies, insult catholicism in its priests and images and ornaments, and, while so doing, to enrich themselves and their principals, was the very different purpose of the men who came after Hawkins, of whom Francis Drake was but one among many of his sort. These rovers had frequently the countenance<sup>1</sup>, but not often the commission, of Elizabeth and her councillors. To the Spaniards they were "thieves by sea," and, presently, highwaymen by land, to whom before the last quarter of the 16th century had ended they applied generally the word "pirate," with no more and no less justice than usually attends its application to commerce destroyers.

While it has usually been considered that the battle of San Juan de Ulua (1568) put an end to the second phase of Anglo-Spanish relations in the West Indies, i.e. to that of "aggressive commerce"<sup>2</sup> (which has now been shown to be far less aggressive than diplomatic<sup>3</sup>), a closer study of Spanish documents makes it evident that although the battle of San Juan de Ulua did usher in the third phase of these relations, i.e. the era of irregular warfare among the islands and along the continents—it did not, as a matter of fact, terminate the second phase. Illicit commerce continued after 1568 "as usual." Not even the house of Hawkins abandoned its system, forsook its usual haunts, or turned upon its old friends in the Indies<sup>4</sup>. After 1568 both phases existed simultaneously—

<sup>1</sup> "It is believed that Captain John Hawkins, his brother, Sir William Winter, many others, the brothers of this Francis Drake, and Louis Larder(er), are participants and accomplices in these crimes and robberies. For instance, they cite that a slave boy obtained in one of these piracies was given to a councillor, who presented him to the queen, who highly prized him. She was led to understand that he had been brought from Guinea. . . ."—*A. de I. 2-5-2/21, Patronato 266, 1.*

<sup>2</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> Observe that Hawkins blamed the failure of his 1566 adventure upon "the simplenes" of Lovell and Drake, "whoe knew not howe to handle these matters." Cf. Williamson, J. A., *Sir John Hawkins*, Clarendon Press, 1927, p. 520. Had aggression been what was lacking, Drake could have been relied upon to furnish that!

<sup>4</sup> The editor doubts that the Hawkins brothers forbore to trade even in the years immediately following the 1568 disaster; certainly there are Spanish documents to prove that in 1583 William Hawkins himself was in the Indies on a commercial reconnaissance.

illicit trade and irregular warfare—until in 1586 Drake's great raid proclaimed a recognized state of war.

Now, just as the Portuguese were the earliest corsairs, driving contraband trade in slaves especially, so the French were the first pirates in the West Indies<sup>1</sup>. The English and the Dutch<sup>2</sup> steered close in the wake of both. To the Spaniards these foreigners were all "enemies"—of God and of the king—"heretic Lutherans," abhorrent to "both majesties," with some of whom illicit business might sometimes be done, against all of whom it was increasingly necessary to be on guard. Among them (unfortunately for the historian) the Spaniards did not correctly distinguish even nationality, to say nothing of the true names of ships, ports of origin, or the identity of commanders, many of whom worked under *noms de guerre* (John Goodweather, Nicholas of the Isles, John Noble, etc.). The names of others appear curiously translated from one language to another, or even more fantastically corrupted. *Aquines* for Hawkins, *Dracques* for Drake, and *Guataral* for Walter Raleigh are typical; and easier to decipher than *los capitanes de ysla dui y forsamua*, captains of the Isle of Wight and of Portsmouth, for the interpretation of which the writer is indebted to Dr Williamson.

Indeed, even at the moment, it must have been difficult to identify shifting units, given the loose agreements (like Hawkins' with Bland, or Drake's with Le Testu) into which vessels or groups of vessels of different nationalities frequently entered, sometimes before they left Europe, sometimes when they met upon the Guinea coast, sometimes *en route* to the Indies or after their arrival there. Under these agreements they formed joint expeditions, which as readily broke up, once their purpose was achieved or defeated. It must have been difficult to identify them—especially when they were no more desirous to be identified than contrabandists or raiders generally are.

<sup>1</sup> The French made their first appearance in the Indies in 1528, according to depositions preserved in *A. de I.* 53-1-9, Santo Domingo 9, an *información*.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 2.

From a mass of material available at Seville, Documents Nos. 1, 2 and 3 of this collection were chosen to depict conditions prevailing by sea, especially along the Spanish Main, in 1569, i.e. at the commencement of the third phase of Anglo-Spanish relations (irregular warfare) in the Caribbean. Document No. 4 suggests what conditions prevailed by land. There the Spaniards were harassed and their goods and lives endangered by escaped slaves—blacks called *cimarrones* or 'maroons. Not only did these negroes maintain their liberty, but, also, as their numbers were augmented by natural increase and by their captures of the more docile slaves whom they carried off by force from the outskirts of the Spanish settlements, by 1569 they had come to constitute a serious menace to the few sparsely populated towns upon the isthmus<sup>1</sup>. Document No. 9 is a résumé of these circumstances, which the genius of Francis Drake turned to his advantage in the early, more picturesque, stage of his career.

Not this stage, but his subsequent career lends to the Drake of this period an interest and an importance which he did not in reality then possess. He was as yet truly "a meane subject of her Majesties<sup>2</sup>," who had not exhibited any outstanding ability, neither in 1566 (at Rio de la Hacha with John Lovell) nor in 1568 (with Hawkins, on Hawkins' third voyage). He was at this time merely one adventurous and apparently popular captain among many to whom appealed mightily the danger, the satisfaction and the profit to be had from robbing a mortal enemy near the source of his dangerous

<sup>1</sup> "This land is wearied of the *cimarrones* and the French; and certainly it is a great pity, for those who are doing business both by sea and by river are readily despoiled, amidst many affronts. This is a matter which it touches your majesty's conscience to remedy for love of God..." —The bishop to the crown, Panama, February 8, 1570, in *A. de I.* 69-4-31, Panama 100. Writing under date of March 15, 1571, from Panama, the bishop urged that no more negroes be sent to Tierra Firme, "for certainly human tongue cannot relate the ignominies which both French and *cimarrones* have this year inflicted here on all sorts of persons; and of a thousand negroes who arrive annually, 300 or more escape to the wilds..."—*A. de I.* 69-2-21, Panama 11, f. 233.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 251, 253, *post*. Cf. Corbett, *op. cit.* 1, pp. 191-2.

strength. Because in later years Drake became far more than this, details of his earlier voyages acquire an interest which does not attach to those of other quite similar voyages made at the same time by certain of his friends and compatriots who had no higher destiny before them.

It will be recalled that Drake reached England, after the San Juan de Ulua disaster, on January 20, 1569. William Hawkins at once despatched him to London with a demand on Cecil and the council for a commission of reprisal. Drake was of a disposition to argue hotly, under the circumstances, for such leave to seek revenge. On January 25, 1569, John Hawkins landed in Cornwall. The tone of the letter<sup>1</sup> which he wrote to Cecil from Mount's Bay suggests that this time the elder cooler man may have been in no humour to lay any restraint upon the younger. On February 4 John Hawkins reached London.

In his own account of the San Juan de Ulua affair Hawkins states that on the night of the battle Drake "forsooke" him in his "greate miserie<sup>2</sup>." Coming from a man who is not known publicly to have condemned any other officer who ever served under him<sup>3</sup>, this was severe censure. It has long constituted a basis for the generally accepted supposition that the disastrous end of the third voyage permanently estranged Hawkins and Drake. As a matter of fact, immediately thereafter may have been the one moment when they worked in perfect agreement, since "the treason of the Spanyards" upon that occasion had moved John Hawkins out of the calculating temper of the merchant which had theretofore been as markedly his as had the temper of the aggressive fighter been Drake's from the beginning. Yet neither Drake nor Hawkins, their story, nor the evidence of its truth which they must have shown in their persons, moved Cecil to grant the commission of reprisal asked of him. It is inconceivable, however, that he should not have sympathized with their desire for it.

<sup>1</sup> John Hawkins to Sir William Cecil, Mount's Bay, Cornwall, January 25, 1569, in Hawkins, Mary S. W., *Plymouth Armada Heroes*, Plymouth, 1888, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Hakluyt, Richard, *Principal Navigations*, Glasgow, 1904, x, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Williamson, J. A., "Books on Drake," in *History*, xii, No. 48, p. 315.

Immediately, "Drake disappears...<sup>1</sup>" "*The English Hero*... says that he now served for some time upon one of the queen's ships to his great advantage<sup>2</sup>." Where did he serve? If not aboard "one of the queen's ships," since Dr Williamson's researches, especially in declared accounts in the Public Record Office, have discovered no trace of such employment of any of her majesty's ships, then is it possible that, aboard some other acceptable vessel, it was in the Indies that Drake served in 1569?

If, without a commission, but with the support of the Hawkinses, the tacit approval of the council and the applause, unquestionably, of seafaring elements, Drake was already off to sea to avenge himself and his lost and abandoned comrades, there was indeed "good reason<sup>3</sup>" not only to dissociate him from the inquiry which was made into the San Juan de Ulua affair, but also in every other fashion to stifle curiosity concerning his whereabouts in the early part of 1569.

The writer does not agree with Dr Williamson's supposition that Drake may have indulged in any piratical proceedings between his clearance from San Juan de Ulua after the battle and his arrival in Plymouth, to cover which might have been the object of a conspiracy of silence. The San Juan de Ulua affair left Drake in no condition to assume the aggressive, nor has investigation at Seville discovered any indication that he did so. The admiralty court's silence concerning him seems better explained by supposing that, although Drake did not obtain the commission of reprisal he demanded, he did obtain tacit permission to do his worst. This, too, better explains John Hawkins' silence with respect to him than the usual supposition that these two men had become widely estranged. As a matter of fact, John Hawkins' silence concerning Drake, then and thereafter, may have been the best possible evidence, if not of friendship and approval, at least of a willingness to co-operate. Hawkins' experience of Drake must have borne in on him that here was a man

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 125-6.

<sup>2</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Williamson, *op. cit.* p. 200.

better fitted to carry out the belligerent intentions which Hawkins' comrades advertised<sup>1</sup> at Vigo, as they refreshed there on their return from Mexico at the end of 1568, than he had ever been to sell negroes and cloth to Spanish colonials.

If Drake "served" in the Indies in 1569, it is almost certain that he worked with Frenchmen. Had he needed any introduction to them, Captain Bland (Blondel) could have furnished it. Given what must have been his humour at the time, Drake doubtless found the purposes of the French, and even their methods, congenial. They made a record in the Indies that year (1569) for cruelty<sup>2</sup>.

Out of Diego Flores' second fleet, which Pedro Menéndez and the armada were escorting, they cut a richly-laden vessel (said to belong to the *adelantado* himself); it was reported that they deliberately drowned its crew and passengers, women and religious among them<sup>3</sup>. Twice they took Tolu, once by assault; and the second time they burned the town<sup>4</sup>. They appeared at the mouth of the Chagre River and there

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, 13.

<sup>2</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-1, Panama 32, for depositions made at Nombre de Dios, May, 1569, concerning damage done, etc., etc.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 3 and 7. "Captain...[torn away], a Norman, took a vessel proceeding to the Indies with Pedro Menéndez' armada, aboard which was a Spanish lady and other women and her two children and more than fifty-eight religious and many other passengers and seamen. They say there were 265 persons in the ship...and that he threw them overboard and carried off the vessel with more than 100,000 ducats in goods to Brest in Brittany. This same Nepeville is the man who burned Tolu..."—The ambassador's memorandum (September, 1571), in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 53. "In the year 1569 Captain Nepeville with five ships took a vessel, Francisco Muñoz master, burgher of Triana. It was a unit in Pedro Menéndez' convoy and witness believes that he got more than 100,000 ducats out of her, for she was laden. She was taken off Santa Marta. Witness knows of the matter because the French who committed this robbery, themselves told him..." (when in 1571 he was their prisoner)—Pedro Morera, deposition, Havana, July 23 (?), 1572, item 54 of the *legajo* cited.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Nos. 3 and 9, item 5. Writing to the crown from Panama, [letter preserved in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 16], under date of June 26, 1569, Licentiate Carasa states that the first attack occurred either at the very end of 1568 or early in January, 1569, and the second shortly afterwards. In *A. de I.* 72-5-12, Santa Fé 83, may be seen an *información* on the merits of Juan de Espinoza, burgher of Tolu, wherein it appears that the enemy burned Tolu upon the second occasion.

seized river barks from which they got gold and silver, and miscellaneous cargo of less interest<sup>1</sup>. Off the coast of Veragua they took a Nicaraguan frigate aboard which was a fortune in coin<sup>2</sup>. All this occurred before July 1, 1569, when Diego Flores left for Spain, for it is recorded that to his mortification these things happened while he was present on the Mainland coast, or before he arrived<sup>3</sup>. If Drake participated in any of them, he must have had just time (and none to spare) to return home in fine fettle to marry his Mary at St Budeaux on July 4 of that year<sup>4</sup>.

One reason for supposing that Drake had a share in these depredations is that when he and the French reappeared in 1571 they seem to have been recognized<sup>5</sup> and reported to be the same relentless enemies who had raided and robbed and killed in 1569. It is certain that the French were the same. If the English were, then Francis Drake's third voyage to the Indies was one hitherto unknown, made in 1569.

Whether or no he made such a voyage in close association with, or, more probably, in subordination to, the French, is a problem which perhaps cannot be certainly decided until close study be made of French documents concerning the men herein called Bontemps, Jolis, Harnao, Ambile, Bienville, Nepeville (Capdeville?), Bland (Blondel) and Nicholas of the Isles. Meantime, with these Spanish documents in view, it is surely permissible to ask: Where was Francis Drake between February 4 and July 4, 1569, if not in the Indies with the French, who (in Bland and his crew) were smarting as he was under the memory of San Juan de Ulua, nor needed that additional incident to inflame them against Spaniards?

An argument for the possibility that Drake was indeed present with the French who, in 1569, laid such heavy toll upon the Spanish Indies in life and property, is that presently he carried into execution schemes which seem to have originated with these men. He might, however, have learned

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7, etc., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 9, item 4.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 1 and 3.

<sup>4</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Documents Nos. 7, 8, 9, etc. See Sotomayor and Peñalossa to the crown, Nombre de Dios, March, 1571, in *A. de I.* 69-2-3, Panama 33.



of these projects in any port they frequented. Furthermore, such schemes were the logical development of events—a course obvious and open to all. Or Drake may have learned of such plans in February of 1571, especially if the purpose of that year's voyage was "to gaine...intelligences".<sup>1</sup> He must, then, at least have conversed with these Frenchmen, even if he were not in close working agreement with them at the time.

It is stated in *Sir Francis Drake Revived*<sup>2</sup> that Drake went to the Indies in 1570 with two ships, the *Dragon* and the *Swan*. The assertion that he went in 1570 is not incompatible with the supposition that he had been there the year before, on a voyage concerning which it was wisdom to say nothing whatsoever, either at the time or at any later period.

The Ashmole MS. 830 states that "in the year 1570 he (Drake) went to the Indies in a barke of ffortie tonnes...." Neither is this incompatible with the foregoing, since from its name—the *Dragon* being a common ship name in France—it is possible to infer that the Ashmole "barke" was the *Swan*, sailing with a French associate.

The student of Spanish documents must, however, be somewhat troubled by the rest of the first indictment of the Ashmole MS., which declares that in 1570 Drake and "an Englishe marchant of Exeter called Richard Dennys and others... upon the coast of Nombre de Dios did robbe divers barkes in the river of Chacro and in the same river did robbe divers barkes that were transporting of marchandizes of ffortye thousand duckattes, velvettes and taffitas, besides other marchandizes with gold and silver in other barkes and with the same came to Plymouth where it was divided amongst his partners." The student's difficulty arises from the evidence before him that, as a matter of fact, nothing of this sort happened off Nombre de Dios or in the Chagre River in 1570; whereas in 1570/71 it did.

In 1570 nothing of any importance whatever occurred in the Indies, the Ashmole MS. to the contrary notwithstanding.

<sup>1</sup> p. 254, *post*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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1569-1580

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PHILIP II. OF SPAIN

*Portrait attributed to Sofonisba Anguisciola  
in the National Portrait Gallery, London.*



DOCUMENTS  
CONCERNING ENGLISH VOYAGES  
TO THE SPANISH MAIN  
1569-1580

I

*SPANISH DOCUMENTS*  
SELECTED FROM THE ARCHIVES OF  
THE INDIES AT SEVILLE

II

*ENGLISH ACCOUNTS*  
"SIR FRANCIS DRAKE REVIVED"  
AND OTHERS, REPRINTED

BY

I. A. WRIGHT, B.A., F.R.Hist.S.

COMENDADORA, ORDER OF ALFONSO XII  
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## PREFACE

THIS book is complementary to the Hakluyt Society's No. LXII, Second Series, *Spanish Documents concerning English Voyages to the Caribbean, 1527-1568*. Those of the present volume carry the story forward, through Oxenham's disastrous expedition, to 1580.

Of these Spanish documents little need be said, since they speak eloquently for themselves. The originals are in good condition and in good custody, in the General Archives of the Indies at Seville, Spain.

To make them more intelligible, an outline map of the Main (and Antilles) is included, at the end of the book. Places mentioned in the text of the volume will be found upon that map; and therefore notes explanatory of them have been omitted, as superfluous. Further, opposite p. 46, is a map which shows the lie of the isthmus on a somewhat larger scale, whereon the student may follow Drake's route to Venta Cruces and Oxenham's to Vallano.

To supplement these Spanish accounts of the various English enterprises there are presented, in Part II, the most interesting available English versions of the same matters. Chief of these (No. 1) is a remarkable work (*Sir Francis Drake Revived*), the full title of which sets forth its origin and its purpose. On that title page<sup>1</sup> it is stated that this truly "Memorable Relation of . . . Rare occurrences" was compiled by Philip Nichols, preacher, from the reports of Drake's first independent voyage furnished by certain participants in it; and it is there further asserted that the text was "Reviewed by Sir Francis Drake himselfe before his death, and much holpen and enlarged by divers Notes with his owne hand here and there Inserted." The finished work was proffered to Charles I by Drake's nephew, who in the volume (first

<sup>1</sup> p. 245, *post*.

printed in 1626<sup>1</sup>) included an earlier dedicatory epistle addressed to Elizabeth, dated January 1, 1592, which purports to have been written by Sir Francis himself. Therein Drake claims credit for the entire composition, the book being, he says, the "first fruites" of his unaccustomed pen. Further critical study, which the work merits, may determine whether or not the preacher's text, based on Seely's and Hixon's relations, was indeed so "much holpen and enlarged... with his owne hand" that we may consider Drake to be the author of it. For my part, I incline to think that he claimed the book with as much justification as pride.

Doubtless because it is lively and colourful, not only the authenticity but also the veracity of *Sir Francis Drake Revived* has been questioned<sup>2</sup>. It must surely be recognized that the contemporary Spanish documents herewith published (Nos. 17-28, 30, 31) establish its validity beyond cavil. To be sure, the English were not always well informed concerning the Spaniards' customs, strength, movements and intentions; and the Spaniards were equally ignorant concerning those of the English. Be this as it may, the reader is invited to study the story of Drake's attack on the pack-train at Campos River, Nombre de Dios (April, 1573), as told in *Sir Francis Drake Revived* and corroborated in Documents Nos. 24, 31, etc., and ask himself whether he can reasonably doubt that the event occurred as the book relates; and, finally, whether in any work of fiction (classic or "thriller") he has read anything to surpass this tale, in diversity of incident, in vividness of description, or in the portrayal of character.

Whether Drake was writing to attract approbation and recruits to his last voyage (as well he may have been), or, as he says in the dedication to the queen, "that posteritie be

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Bourne, who printed the first edition, issued a second in 1628, the text of which was used in the present work. The book was reprinted in 1653 (November 8, 1652) as part first of "a summary and true relation of four several voyages made by the said Sir Francis Drake to the West Indies." These editions are all available in the North Library of the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, by both Froude and Fernandez Duro. However, see Corbett, Sir Julian, *Drake and the Tudor Navy*, Longmans, London, 1912, I, p. 401.

not deprived of such helpe," certainly *Sir Francis Drake Revived* deserves a permanent and honoured place among the very best records of those amazing 16th-century adventures out of which grew the sea-power of England.

Item No. 2 of Part II is the better of Hakluyt's two accounts of Oxenham's expedition, both of which seem to have been drawn from the same original, credited to a Portuguese pilot called Lopez Vaz. This may possibly be the Antonio Vaez mentioned in Document No. 29. It will be observed that his relation is based upon no first-hand knowledge of the events it describes. While far less valuable as a source for history than the Spanish documents of this collection, Nos. 36 *et seq.*, it is nevertheless of interest, if only because it is all that his compatriots have known of Oxenham and his men from the time they left Plymouth in 1576 until the appearance of this present book in the year of grace 1932, three and a half centuries later.

Item No. 3 of Part II, Hakluyt's account of Barker's expedition, is similarly reprinted for the student's convenience in comparing it with these Spanish documents which correct and supplement it.

Item No. 4, from Richard Hawkins's well-known *Observations*, is appended not for its historical import but because it is curious, and quite properly closes our volume on a high note of morality, in a manner which would have won the approval of those persons whose exploits are here set forth.

For encouragement and very material assistance in the work of preparing this publication I am much indebted to the Hakluyt Society's president, Sir William Foster, to its secretary, Mr Edward Lynam, and to Dr James A. Williamson. By his invaluable criticism of the work made from the English point of view, Dr Williamson has helped me to keep my balance, as it were.

Finally, repeated thanks are due to Sr. Don Cristóbal Bermudez Plata, chief of the Archives of the Indies, who has established and maintains excellent working conditions in that great institution; and to his staff, particularly its humbler members, the *ordenanzas*, whose backs must have ached,

often, from carrying bales of papers back and forth between my desk and the shelves.

The preceding volume of similar Spanish documents was of service to British writers (according to their acknowledgments and to press comments). It is hoped that this volume may be of use to even more of them; but the editor would feel still better repaid for the labour which has gone into this book were such students to come to Spain, especially to Seville, to delve for themselves into the great collections of Spanish state papers, where so much bearing directly upon British history remains unknown. Facilities for travel to and in Spain, present living conditions here, the character of Spain's archivists (in any event, those at Seville), have invalidated any excuse which might be advanced on behalf of British historians for failure to consult Spanish sources for any work on any topic in history to which Spain was the party of the other part.

It is hoped to follow this volume, in due season, with another, presenting later documents of the same sort. There is no end to the material available at Seville alone, to say nothing of Madrid and Simancas, where unquestionably more is to be had.

IRENE A. WRIGHT

SEVILLE 1931

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	<i>page xv</i>
------------------------	----------------

## PART I

Doc.

1. Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569 . . . . .	3
2. An Account of what two Seamen relate (after June, 1569(?)) . . . . .	5
3. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569 . . . . .	7
4. Licentiate Carasa to the Crown, Panama, March 27, 1570 . . . . .	9
5. English Corsairs to certain Spaniards, the Main, February(?), 1571 . . . . .	10
6. Doña Juana de Estrada and Luis de Soto, Depositions, Nombre de Dios, March 1, 1571 . . . . .	12
7. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571 . . . . .	16
8. Diego Flores de Valdés to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, March 16, 1571 . . . . .	18
9. Interrogatory presented at Nombre de Dios, May 15, 1571 . . . . .	20
10. Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 20, 1571 . . . . .	25
11. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 21, 1571 . . . . .	27
12. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 24, 1571 . . . . .	29
13. The City of Panama to the Crown, May 25, 1571 . . . . .	31
14. Diego Mazariegos to the Crown, Coro, October 29, 1571 . . . . .	36
15. Sancho Pardo Osorio to Licentiate Ovando, Havana, May 24, 1572 . . . . .	37
16. Sancho Pardo Osorio to the President and Officials of the House of Trade, Havana, May 25, 1572 . . . . .	39

Doc.

17. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, September 12, 1572 . . . . .	page 40
18. Martin de Mendoza, Interrogatory and Depositions, Cartagena, December 9, 1572 . . . . .	42
19. Diego Flores de Valdés to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 20, 1573 . . . . .	44
20. Pedro de Ortega Valencia to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 22, 1573 . . . . .	46
21. Municipal Council of Panama to the Crown, February 24, 1573 . . . . .	48
22. Miguel Ordoño to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, February 26, 1573 . . . . .	52
23. Jorge Nuñez de Prado, his Services, Depositions made at Panama, April, 1573 . . . . .	54
24. Cristóbal Monte to . . . (Nombre de Dios, very early in May, 1573) . . . . .	60
25. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 4, 1573 . . . . .	63
26. Royal Officials of Panama to the Crown, May 9, 1573 . . . . .	68
27. Royal Officials of Nombre de Dios to the Crown, May 13, 1573 . . . . .	71
28. The City of Nombre de Dios to the Crown, May 14, 1573 . . . . .	72
29. Dr Villalobos to the Crown, Guatemala, May 15, 1573 . . . . .	74
30. Juan Bautista Manuel and Alvaro Flores, Depositions, Seville, September 28–October 6, 1573 . . . . .	76
31. Diego Calderon, his Services, Depositions made at Panama, April 22, 1574 . . . . .	81
32. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, September 22, 1574 . . . . .	93
33. Pedro Godinez Osorio to the Crown, Veragua, April 3, 1575 . . . . .	94
34. Don Diego de Herrera to the Crown, Puerto de Caballos, April 4, 1575 . . . . .	96
35. Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, May 20, 1575 . . . . .	97
36. Pedro Godinez Osorio to the Crown, Veragua, March 22, 1577 . . . . .	100
37. "Papers of Captain Francisco de Acles, Englishman [John Barker]," 1577 . . . . .	102



Doc.		
38.	The City of Panama to the Crown, April 15, 1577	page 109
39.	Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, April 17, 1577	115
40.	Diego de Sotomayor, Deposition, Panama, April 17, 1577	117
41.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, April 26, 1577	123
42.	The City of Panama to the Crown, April 26, 1577	132
43.	<i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 1, 1577	136
44.	Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, May 7, 1577	142
45.	The City of Panama to the Viceroy of Peru, June 7, 1577	144
46.	Doctor Loarte to [the Viceroy of Peru], Panama, June 8, 1577	148
47.	Domingo Felix to Francisco Recio, Cartagena, July 15, 1577	153
48.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Panama, July 28, 1577	154
49.	Doctor Salcedo Nieto to Juan Rubio, Panama, August 4, 1577	158
50.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, September 5, 1577	159
51.	Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, October 15, 1577	166
52.	John Oxenham, Deposition, made at Vallano, October 20, 1577	169
53.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Vallano, October 21, 1577	178
54.	Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, October 24, 1577	184
55.	Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, October 26, 1577	187
56.	Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, October 31, 1577	191
57.	Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the Crown, Carta- gena, November 21, 1577	192
58.	Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Vallano, December 7, 1577	194

Doc.

59. Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, December 29, 1577 . . . . .	page 196
60. Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown, Trujillo, January 7, 1578 . . . . .	198
61. Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, San Miguel de Vallano, February 18, 1578 . . . . .	200
62. Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown, Panama, February 22, 1578 . . . . .	203
63. Carlos de Maluenda to the Crown, Panama, February 23, 1578 . . . . .	205
64. Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the Crown, Cartagena, March 13, 1578 . . . . .	207
65. Alonso de Contreras Guevara to the Crown, San Juan de Puerto de Caballos, April 12, 1578 . . . . .	208
66. Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown, Panama, May 12, 1578 . . . . .	211
67. Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Panama, May 15, 1578 . . . . .	215
68. <i>Audiencia</i> of Panama to the Crown, May 21, 1578 . . . . .	220
69. Pedro de Arana to the Crown, Panama, May 21, 1578 . . . . .	223
70. John Oxenham, Deposition, Panama, July 7, 1578 . . . . .	232
71. Doctor Diego de Villanueva Zapata to the Crown, Panama, October 2, 1579 . . . . .	235
72. Licentiate Cepeda to the Crown, Panama, May 22, 1580 . . . . .	236
73. Pedro Gonzalez de Meseta to the Crown, Nombre de Dios, June 3, 1580. Enclosure, Pedro and the <i>sambigo</i> , Statement, January 13 [1580] . . . . .	238

## PART II

I. <i>Sir Francis Drake Revived</i> . . . . .	245
II. <i>The Voyage of John Oxnam (Oxenham) of Plimmouth.</i> . . . .	327
III. <i>The Voyage of Master Andrew Barker of Bristol.</i> . . . .	333
IV. <i>Sir R. Hawkins, his Observations. (Extract)</i> . . . . .	339
INDEX . . . . .	343

## ILLUSTRATION AND MAPS

Portrait of Philip II of Spain, attributed to Sofonisba Anguisciola ( <i>National Portrait Gallery, London</i> )	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Map of the Isthmus of Panama . . . . .	<i>face p. 46</i>
Map of the Antilles and Central America . . . . .	<i>at end</i>

## INTRODUCTION

IT was as explorers that the English first presented themselves in Spain's Indies, in 1527, although even then they were probably not averse from trade<sup>1</sup>. It was as business men that they returned, in 1562, their sole object being profit. To obtain profit, if for no other reason, they desired to trade peaceably. Because (his Catholic majesty's laws and the Roman church's prohibitions to the contrary notwithstanding) Spanish colonials on the islands and along the Main were eager to do business with them, peace prevailed (sometimes under the fiction of hostilities) and trade thrived<sup>2</sup> between these colonials and men who, like John Hawkins, were corsairs in the sense in which that word was used in his time, i.e. to mean illicit trader or contrabandist.

However, distinct from the Hawkinses and their kind, there were other English (individuals and groups) to whose character and convictions events in England, in Europe, and in America itself, were making friendly intercourse with Spanish papists increasingly distasteful. They voyaged, or financed voyages,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Society's publication No. LXII, Second Series, *English Voyages to the Caribbean, 1527-1568*.

<sup>2</sup> The situation is lucidly summarized in a "memorandum of matters relating to revenues in the Indies," preserved in *A. de I.* 140-7-32, and endorsed: "Drawn up in the Council for Indies and approved by his majesty." On p. 3 "vessels and fleets of corsairs which sail the Indies course" are considered to represent a loss in revenues. "They say they carry merchandise and products from England, France and other parts, and sell and barter these to his majesty's subjects at lower prices than those prevailing for goods from Seville, wherefore they are well received and covered by these subjects. As return cargoes the foreigners carry home gold and silver and *en route* do what harm and damage they are able, and they report on the land and on the sea routes. They and others are developing an appetite for such business and profits, and because they are avaricious, fond of money, and possess such resources in ships, cordage, seamen, pilots and all else necessary for the voyage, unless a remedy be applied betimes this evil, which is great, will augment daily."

to the Indies for profit, to be sure, but they were no longer particular, as John Hawkins had been, to give value for value obtained. After Pedro Menéndez de Avilés had eliminated the French from Florida (especially from 1567 on), the English sailed the Caribbean and along the Main in company with formidable Huguenot captains whose professed object was adequate as well as profitable revenge. After 1568 the English had scores of their own to settle, and from 1569 forward their activities constitute the third phase of Anglo-Spanish relations in the West Indies, which was war (*guerre de course*), waged through seventeen years in which neither Elizabeth nor Philip saw fit to recognize it for what it was (1569-86).

After 1568, in close association with men like Jean Bontemps, Captain Le Testu, possibly even with Dominique de Gourges<sup>1</sup>, and later (1572 and thereafter) on their own account, relegating business to a secondary place, with heavy hand these English took from Spaniards in the Indies "recompence" and "amends" for "losse" and "wrongs" received<sup>2</sup>. Hawkins had sought to establish permanent business relations, and would have preferred that they should be legitimate; to be "revenged for injury<sup>3</sup>" to themselves,

<sup>1</sup> Governor Pedro Ponce de Leon (to the crown, Coro, December 15, 1567, in *A. de I.* 54-4-15, Santo Domingo 193) states that they were French and Scotch who burned Borburata in revenge for Ribaut's death. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 45, affords details of the methods, but not the identity, of these avengers.

Counsel for the crown, in pressing for prosecution of soldiers accused of deserting Fort San Mateo (near the present-day Jacksonville, Florida) when Dominique de Gourges attacked in 1568, states that the assailants were French and English. Cf. the *fiscal's* memorial, *A. de I.* 54-5-16, Santo Domingo 231, 7. Very possibly these are two references to one and the same expedition.

Cf. *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 277, Guerau de Spes to the crown, London, September 11, 1570, reference to La Rochelle and especially to Jolis and his English crew.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Corbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 147-8. "The laconic statement of the family narrative" concerning Drake's motives (and observe the frank wording of the third line of its very title!) sounds more convincing, with Spanish state papers in view, than does Sir Julian's elaboration of national policies behind him.

<sup>3</sup> "... (Hawkins) asserts that he will be revenged for the injury the Spaniards have done him"—Guerau de Spes to the crown, London, July 1, 1570, in *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 258.

to their fellow-countrymen or co-religionists, to humiliate their enemies, insult catholicism in its priests and images and ornaments, and, while so doing, to enrich themselves and their principals, was the very different purpose of the men who came after Hawkins, of whom Francis Drake was but one among many of his sort. These rovers had frequently the countenance<sup>1</sup>, but not often the commission, of Elizabeth and her councillors. To the Spaniards they were "thieves by sea," and, presently, highwaymen by land, to whom before the last quarter of the 16th century had ended they applied generally the word "pirate," with no more and no less justice than usually attends its application to commerce destroyers.

While it has usually been considered that the battle of San Juan de Ulua (1568) put an end to the second phase of Anglo-Spanish relations in the West Indies, i.e. to that of "aggressive commerce<sup>2</sup>" (which has now been shown to be far less aggressive than diplomatic<sup>3</sup>), a closer study of Spanish documents makes it evident that although the battle of San Juan de Ulua did usher in the third phase of these relations, i.e. the era of irregular warfare among the islands and along the continents—it did not, as a matter of fact, terminate the second phase. Illicit commerce continued after 1568 "as usual." Not even the house of Hawkins abandoned its system, forsook its usual haunts, or turned upon its old friends in the Indies<sup>4</sup>. After 1568 both phases existed simultaneously—

<sup>1</sup> "It is believed that Captain John Hawkins, his brother, Sir William Winter, many others, the brothers of this Francis Drake, and Louis Larder(er), are participants and accomplices in these crimes and robberies. For instance, they cite that a slave boy obtained in one of these piracies was given to a councillor, who presented him to the queen, who highly prized him. She was led to understand that he had been brought from Guinea...."—*A. de I.* 2-5-2/21, *Patronato* 266, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> Observe that Hawkins blamed the failure of his 1566 adventure upon "the simplenes" of Lovell and Drake, "whoe knew not howe to handle these matters." Cf. Williamson, J. A., *Sir John Hawkins*, Clarendon Press, 1927, p. 520. Had aggression been what was lacking, Drake could have been relied upon to furnish that!

<sup>4</sup> The editor doubts that the Hawkins brothers forbore to trade even in the years immediately following the 1568 disaster; certainly there are Spanish documents to prove that in 1583 William Hawkins himself was in the Indies on a commercial reconnaissance.

illicit trade and irregular warfare—until in 1586 Drake's great raid proclaimed a recognized state of war.

Now, just as the Portuguese were the earliest corsairs, driving contraband trade in slaves especially, so the French were the first pirates in the West Indies<sup>1</sup>. The English and the Dutch<sup>2</sup> steered close in the wake of both. To the Spaniards these foreigners were all "enemies"—of God and of the king—"heretic Lutherans," abhorrent to "both majesties," with some of whom illicit business might sometimes be done, against all of whom it was increasingly necessary to be on guard. Among them (unfortunately for the historian) the Spaniards did not correctly distinguish even nationality, to say nothing of the true names of ships, ports of origin, or the identity of commanders, many of whom worked under *noms de guerre* (John Goodweather, Nicholas of the Isles, John Noble, etc.). The names of others appear curiously translated from one language to another, or even more fantastically corrupted. *Aquines* for Hawkins, *Dracques* for Drake, and *Guataral* for Walter Raleigh are typical; and easier to decipher than *los capitanes de ysla dui y forsamua*, captains of the Isle of Wight and of Portsmouth, for the interpretation of which the writer is indebted to Dr Williamson.

Indeed, even at the moment, it must have been difficult to identify shifting units, given the loose agreements (like Hawkins' with Bland, or Drake's with Le Testu) into which vessels or groups of vessels of different nationalities frequently entered, sometimes before they left Europe, sometimes when they met upon the Guinea coast, sometimes *en route* to the Indies or after their arrival there. Under these agreements they formed joint expeditions, which as readily broke up, once their purpose was achieved or defeated. It must have been difficult to identify them—especially when they were no more desirous to be identified than contrabandists or raiders generally are.

<sup>1</sup> The French made their first appearance in the Indies in 1528, according to depositions preserved in *A. de I.* 53-1-9, Santo Domingo 9, an *información*.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 2.

From a mass of material available at Seville, Documents Nos. 1, 2 and 3 of this collection were chosen to depict conditions prevailing by sea, especially along the Spanish Main, in 1569, i.e. at the commencement of the third phase of Anglo-Spanish relations (irregular warfare) in the Caribbean. Document No. 4 suggests what conditions prevailed by land. There the Spaniards were harassed and their goods and lives endangered by escaped slaves—blacks called *cimarrones* or 'maroons. Not only did these negroes maintain their liberty, but, also, as their numbers were augmented by natural increase and by their captures of the more docile slaves whom they carried off by force from the outskirts of the Spanish settlements, by 1569 they had come to constitute a serious menace to the few sparsely populated towns upon the isthmus<sup>1</sup>. Document No. 9 is a résumé of these circumstances, which the genius of Francis Drake turned to his advantage in the early, more picturesque, stage of his career.

Not this stage, but his subsequent career lends to the Drake of this period an interest and an importance which he did not in reality then possess. He was as yet truly "a meane subject of her Majesties<sup>2</sup>," who had not exhibited any outstanding ability, neither in 1566 (at Rio de la Hacha with John Lovell) nor in 1568 (with Hawkins, on Hawkins' third voyage). He was at this time merely one adventurous and apparently popular captain among many to whom appealed mightily the danger, the satisfaction and the profit to be had from robbing a mortal enemy near the source of his dangerous

<sup>1</sup> "This land is wearied of the *cimarrones* and the French; and certainly it is a great pity, for those who are doing business both by sea and by river are readily despoiled, amidst many affronts. This is a matter which it touches your majesty's conscience to remedy for love of God..."—The bishop to the crown, Panama, February 8, 1570, in *A. de I.* 69-4-31, Panama 100. Writing under date of March 15, 1571, from Panama, the bishop urged that no more negroes be sent to Tierra Firme, "for certainly human tongue cannot relate the ignominies which both French and *cimarrones* have this year inflicted here on all sorts of persons; and of a thousand negroes who arrive annually, 300 or more escape to the wilds..."—*A. de I.* 69-2-21, Panama 11, f. 233.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 251, 253, *post.* Cf. Corbett, *op. cit.* 1, pp. 191-2.

strength. Because in later years Drake became far more than this, details of his earlier voyages acquire an interest which does not attach to those of other quite similar voyages made at the same time by certain of his friends and compatriots who had no higher destiny before them.

It will be recalled that Drake reached England, after the San Juan de Ulua disaster, on January 20, 1569. William Hawkins at once despatched him to London with a demand on Cecil and the council for a commission of reprisal. Drake was of a disposition to argue hotly, under the circumstances, for such leave to seek revenge. On January 25, 1569, John Hawkins landed in Cornwall. The tone of the letter<sup>1</sup> which he wrote to Cecil from Mount's Bay suggests that this time the elder cooler man may have been in no humour to lay any restraint upon the younger. On February 4 John Hawkins reached London.

In his own account of the San Juan de Ulua affair Hawkins states that on the night of the battle Drake "forsooke" him in his "greate miserie<sup>2</sup>." Coming from a man who is not known publicly to have condemned any other officer who ever served under him<sup>3</sup>, this was severe censure. It has long constituted a basis for the generally accepted supposition that the disastrous end of the third voyage permanently estranged Hawkins and Drake. As a matter of fact, immediately thereafter may have been the one moment when they worked in perfect agreement, since "the treason of the Spanyards" upon that occasion had moved John Hawkins out of the calculating temper of the merchant which had theretofore been as markedly his as had the temper of the aggressive fighter been Drake's from the beginning. Yet neither Drake nor Hawkins, their story, nor the evidence of its truth which they must have shown in their persons, moved Cecil to grant the commission of reprisal asked of him. It is inconceivable, however, that he should not have sympathized with their desire for it.

<sup>1</sup> John Hawkins to Sir William Cecil, Mount's Bay, Cornwall, January 25, 1569, in Hawkins, Mary S. W., *Plymouth Armada Heroes*, Plymouth, 1888, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Hakluyt, Richard, *Principal Navigations*, Glasgow, 1904, x, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Williamson, J. A., "Books on Drake," in *History*, xii, No. 48, p. 315.



Immediately, "Drake disappears...<sup>1</sup>." "*The English Hero*... says that he now served for some time upon one of the queen's ships to his great advantage<sup>2</sup>." Where did he serve? If not aboard "one of the queen's ships," since Dr Williamson's researches, especially in declared accounts in the Public Record Office, have discovered no trace of such employment of any of her majesty's ships, then is it possible that, aboard some other acceptable vessel, it was in the Indies that Drake served in 1569?

If, without a commission, but with the support of the Hawkinses, the tacit approval of the council and the applause, unquestionably, of seafaring elements, Drake was already off to sea to avenge himself and his lost and abandoned comrades, there was indeed "good reason<sup>3</sup>" not only to dissociate him from the inquiry which was made into the San Juan de Ulua affair, but also in every other fashion to stifle curiosity concerning his whereabouts in the early part of 1569.

The writer does not agree with Dr Williamson's supposition that Drake may have indulged in any piratical proceedings between his clearance from San Juan de Ulua after the battle and his arrival in Plymouth, to cover which might have been the object of a conspiracy of silence. The San Juan de Ulua affair left Drake in no condition to assume the aggressive, nor has investigation at Seville discovered any indication that he did so. The admiralty court's silence concerning him seems better explained by supposing that, although Drake did not obtain the commission of reprisal he demanded, he did obtain tacit permission to do his worst. This, too, better explains John Hawkins' silence with respect to him than the usual supposition that these two men had become widely estranged. As a matter of fact, John Hawkins' silence concerning Drake, then and thereafter, may have been the best possible evidence, if not of friendship and approval, at least of a willingness to co-operate. Hawkins' experience of Drake must have borne in on him that here was a man

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* 1, pp. 125-6.

<sup>2</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* 1, p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Williamson, *op. cit.* p. 200.

better fitted to carry out the belligerent intentions which Hawkins' comrades advertised<sup>1</sup> at Vigo, as they refreshed there on their return from Mexico at the end of 1568, than he had ever been to sell negroes and cloth to Spanish colonials.

If Drake "served" in the Indies in 1569, it is almost certain that he worked with Frenchmen. Had he needed any introduction to them, Captain Bland (Blondel) could have furnished it. Given what must have been his humour at the time, Drake doubtless found the purposes of the French, and even their methods, congenial. They made a record in the Indies that year (1569) for cruelty<sup>2</sup>.

Out of Diego Flores' second fleet, which Pedro Menéndez and the armada were escorting, they cut a richly-laden vessel (said to belong to the *adelantado* himself); it was reported that they deliberately drowned its crew and passengers, women and religious among them<sup>3</sup>. Twice they took Tolu, once by assault; and the second time they burned the town<sup>4</sup>. They appeared at the mouth of the Chagre River and there

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, 13.

<sup>2</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-1, Panama 32, for depositions made at Nombre de Dios, May, 1569, concerning damage done, etc., etc.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 3 and 7. "Captain...[torn away], a Norman, took a vessel proceeding to the Indies with Pedro Menéndez' armada, aboard which was a Spanish lady and other women and her two children and more than fifty-eight religious and many other passengers and seamen. They say there were 265 persons in the ship...and that he threw them overboard and carried off the vessel with more than 100,000 ducats in goods to Brest in Brittany. This same Nepeville is the man who burned Tolu..."—The ambassador's memorandum (September, 1571), in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 53. "In the year 1569 Captain Nepeville with five ships took a vessel, Francisco Muñoz master, burgher of Triana. It was a unit in Pedro Menéndez' convoy and witness believes that he got more than 100,000 ducats out of her, for she was laden. She was taken off Santa Marta. Witness knows of the matter because the French who committed this robbery, themselves told him..." (when in 1571 he was their prisoner)—Pedro Morera, deposition, Havana, July 23 (?), 1572, item 54 of the *legajo* cited.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Nos. 3 and 9, item 5. Writing to the crown from Panama, [letter preserved in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 16], under date of June 26, 1569, Licentiate Carasa states that the first attack occurred either at the very end of 1568 or early in January, 1569, and the second shortly afterwards. In *A. de I.* 72-5-12, Santa Fé 83, may be seen an *información* on the merits of Juan de Espinoza, burgher of Tolu, wherein it appears that the enemy burned Tolu upon the second occasion.

seized river barks from which they got gold and silver, and miscellaneous cargo of less interest<sup>1</sup>. Off the coast of Veragua they took a Nicaraguan frigate aboard which was a fortune in coin<sup>2</sup>. All this occurred before July 1, 1569, when Diego Flores left for Spain, for it is recorded that to his mortification these things happened while he was present on the Mainland coast, or before he arrived<sup>3</sup>. If Drake participated in any of them, he must have had just time (and none to spare) to return home in fine fettle to marry his Mary at St Budeaux on July 4 of that year<sup>4</sup>.

One reason for supposing that Drake had a share in these depredations is that when he and the French reappeared in 1571 they seem to have been recognized<sup>5</sup> and reported to be the same relentless enemies who had raided and robbed and killed in 1569. It is certain that the French were the same. If the English were, then Francis Drake's third voyage to the Indies was one hitherto unknown, made in 1569.

Whether or no he made such a voyage in close association with, or, more probably, in subordination to, the French, is a problem which perhaps cannot be certainly decided until close study be made of French documents concerning the men herein called Bontemps, Jolis, Harnao, Ambile, Bienville, Nepeville (Capdeville?), Bland (Blondel) and Nicholas of the Isles. Meantime, with these Spanish documents in view, it is surely permissible to ask: Where was Francis Drake between February 4 and July 4, 1569, if not in the Indies with the French, who (in Bland and his crew) were smarting as he was under the memory of San Juan de Ulua, nor needed that additional incident to inflame them against Spaniards?

An argument for the possibility that Drake was indeed present with the French who, in 1569, laid such heavy toll upon the Spanish Indies in life and property, is that presently he carried into execution schemes which seem to have originated with these men. He might, however, have learned

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7, etc., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 9, item 4.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 1 and 3.

<sup>4</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Documents Nos. 7, 8, 9, etc. See Sotomayor and Peñalosa to the crown, Nombre de Dios, March, 1571, in *A. de I.* 69-2-3, Panama 33.

of these projects in any port they frequented. Furthermore, such schemes were the logical development of events—a course obvious and open to all. Or Drake may have learned of such plans in February of 1571, especially if the purpose of that year's voyage was "to gaine . . . intelligences<sup>1</sup>." He must, then, at least have conversed with these Frenchmen, even if he were not in close working agreement with them at the time.

It is stated in *Sir Francis Drake Revived*<sup>2</sup> that Drake went to the Indies in 1570 with two ships, the *Dragon* and the *Swan*. The assertion that he went in 1570 is not incompatible with the supposition that he had been there the year before, on a voyage concerning which it was wisdom to say nothing whatsoever, either at the time or at any later period.

The Ashmole MS. 830 states that "in the year 1570 he (Drake) went to the Indies in a barke of ffortie tonnes. . . ." Neither is this incompatible with the foregoing, since from its name—the *Dragon* being a common ship name in France—it is possible to infer that the Ashmole "barke" was the *Swan*, sailing with a French associate.

The student of Spanish documents must, however, be somewhat troubled by the rest of the first indictment of the Ashmole MS., which declares that in 1570 Drake and "an Englishe marchant of Exeter called Richard Dennys and others . . . upon the coast of Nombre de Dios did robbe divers barkes in the river of Chacro and in the same river did robbe divers barkes that were transporting of marchandizes of ffortye thousand duckattes, velvettes and taffitas, besides other marchandizes with gold and silver in other barkes and with the same came to Plymouthe where it was divided amongst his partners." The student's difficulty arises from the evidence before him that, as a matter of fact, nothing of this sort happened off Nombre de Dios or in the Chagre River in 1570; whereas in 1570/71 it did.

In 1570 nothing of any importance whatever occurred in the Indies, the Ashmole MS. to the contrary notwithstanding.

<sup>1</sup> p. 254, *post*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

It was very distinctly an off-year for "piracy<sup>1</sup>." There was no true Mainland fleet<sup>2</sup>. This meant there was little legitimate business afloat, to pillage. Moreover, Menéndez' great galleons were lumbering about the Caribbean in search of "enemies." It was wisdom to avoid them. Nevertheless, though the season was dull and they were not aggressive, "enemies" (supposed to be French) were numerous enough.

<sup>1</sup> In September, 1571, the Spanish ambassador at Paris drew up a memorandum of French depredations which is preserved in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 53, to which the Council for the Indies added what it could. These data were formulated into an interrogatory according to which depositions were taken in various ports of the Indies, and on this information were based Spanish claims made against the French (items 40 and 88 of this *legajo*). Unfortunately, in order that confusion might not weaken his position, the ambassador demanded that no mention be made of the English in these depositions, etc., not even when it was obvious that they were involved. In this memorandum, which covers the matter to June 20, 1571, no depredations for 1570 are listed; which may mean that none were committed, or that they were committed by the English and therefore omitted. The general tenor of correspondence from the Indies supports the former alternative.

In like fashion, but somewhat later (1575), similar information was compiled in the Indies concerning depredations committed by the English; two related documents, both "extracts," are preserved at Seville (*A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, 28; 2-5-2/21, *Patronato* 266, 1, see *S.P. Spain*, xviii, cited by Corbett, *op. cit.* i, p. 402) and one, the Ashmole MS. 830, at the Bodleian. The first contains reference to the year 1570 in one paragraph, which reads: "According to other evidence taken in the city of Nombre de Dios on March 15 it appears that on that coast the English at that time took a frigate of Gaspar Hernandez', though it was in ballast."

<sup>2</sup> Diego Flores served Spain as general commanding the Mainland fleet—his first—in 1567. With his second fleet he anchored at Nombre de Dios in June, 1569, and with part of it returned at once, being under orders to be back in Spain before the end of the year. He arrived in Cadiz late in September, 1569. That part of his fleet which he left behind him was brought home by Nicholas Cardona, who cleared from Nombre de Dios in April, 1570. Escorted by Pedro Menéndez with four galleons of the guard, he reached Spain in early August, 1570. Meanwhile, Menéndez' other five galleons patrolled the Caribbean, especially around Hayti, where corsairs were reported to be.

When Diego Flores arrived in September, 1569, preparations were well advanced for another Mainland fleet, that is, for the usual annual fleet for 1570, which was to leave in January. Its clearance was suspended, partly at least because of the rumour that there were many enemy sails along the coast of Spain and among the islands. This fleet did not clear until October, 1570. Again Diego Flores commanded and with this, his third fleet, he arrived in Nombre de Dios late in January of 1571. Presumably that year's most enterprising "enemies" appeared off the Main at about the same time.

If Drake was among them and his purposes piratical, his voyage cannot possibly have been as lucrative as the Ashmole MS. asserts, or there would have been at least such record of it as these Spanish documents do contain of precisely such a seizure of "duckattes, velvettes and taffitas" made on the Chagre River in 1571.

Or if Drake was abroad in 1570 in the more modest character of illicit trader, it is quite possible that, along with the *Dragon*, the *Swan* did good business, being especially welcome to the colonials precisely because there was no true Mainland fleet that year to supply their market. And if the *Swan* did this business quietly, on Hawkins' principles, none concerned would have had any particular occasion to report their transactions in the state papers now accumulated at Seville.

In support of the possibility that Drake's 1570 voyage was such a trading venture (on true Hawkins lines), it is interesting to observe that late in 1569 (November–December) and early (January) in 1570 a considerable number of enemy ships were off the coast of Spain and among the islands. Among these ships the English may not have been more than three or four sail (a ship or two and attendant pinnaces). There is good evidence<sup>1</sup> that their commander was William Hawkins in person, described as "an old man, of about 50 years," "the old captain." His subordinates showed him marked respect to his face; behind his back they robbed his prisoners, towards whom he had been considerate. Captains, under him, of two pinnaces are mentioned, but not by name. These English said that they were going "below," i.e. south of the equator. Doubtless this meant either to Guinea or to Brazil. The Spaniards preferred to believe that their destination was the Indies, and the colonial authorities were warned<sup>2</sup>. The air was

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 42–6–2/6, *Contratación* 5168, iv, ff. 57, 58, 59, 61, 63 and reverse, 68 reverse, 69 reverse, 72 reverse; cf. Williamson, *op. cit.* p. 229, note; 143–3–12, Doctor Mexia to the Council for the Indies, Tenerife, February 4, 1570; 140–7–32, depositions made at Santa Cruz, Tenerife, January 19, 1570, especially Vicente Romano's, who had been a prisoner of these English; Juan de Abalía to the crown, Cadiz, March 6, 1570, etc., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *A. de I.* 69–2–23, Panama 13, the *Audiencia* to the crown, Panama, April 2, 1570, acknowledging receipt of stringent orders to take extra-

full of rumours that John Hawkins was going out to fetch those of his men whom he had been compelled to abandon<sup>1</sup>. These are dates (November, 1569–January, 1570) when Drake, making an Indies voyage in 1570, may well have been off Cape St Vincent and in the vicinity of Tenerife, where the Spaniards believed John Hawkins himself to be, with a son of Ribaut in his company<sup>2</sup>. It will be borne in mind that Drake was not yet exercising independent command, having neither the money nor the credit with which to end his subordination to the Hawkinses. It is extremely probable that he was serving under William Hawkins; and possible that, at the end of 1569 or commencement of 1570, “the old captain” from the neighbourhood of the islands may have sent him into the Indies on a trading voyage to be conducted on the Hawkins plan, i.e. without disturbance.

Obviously, there is much here which must be left for further study to clear up. (1) Did Drake make a voyage to the Indies in 1569? (2) Did he make a voyage in 1570? And was it a trading voyage under the auspices of the house of Hawkins? (3) Does the Ashmole MS. ascribe to 1570 events of 1570/71? Is the problem here merely that of adjustment to the unreformed calendar then used in England? Further research, in English and especially in French archives, or even among Spanish documents, may disclose additional facts.

Certainly, in 1570 (as we now measure the year) nothing occurred so to alarm the Spaniards there as had the audacity of those enemies (French, or French and English) who in 1569 stationed themselves at the mouth of the Chagre and, apparently for the first time, interfered with trade and communications between Spain and the vast realm called Peru. To the Spaniards this was a very serious development.

Until that date the French and the English associated with

ordinary measures to protect the bullion which Cardona eventually brought home safe.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 140–7–32, Don Juan de Mendoza to the crown, from Dublin, March 6, 1570, reporting that “Stukeley has a small ship ready to clear, which Stukeley denies will join John Hawkins, who is said to be returning to ‘Florida’ for his men.”

<sup>2</sup> Abalia’s letter of March 6, 1570, cited above.

them had plundered inter-colony traders, and now and then a Canary Island wine-ship or an advice-boat from Seville. Thus they provided themselves with subsistence and information, and picked up hides, sugar, brazil wood (all local products) and not a little silver and gold. They had sacked miserable seaboard settlements when they could, and held them to ransom. But all in all, the contrabandists probably did a better business than the commerce destroyers, prior to 1569. Now, however, doubtless emboldened by the situation in Europe and encouraged by their own success, these began to tap the main streams of business between Spain and the northern and western coasts of South America.

Interest in those enormous areas—which are now Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile—was at the moment very keen<sup>1</sup>, because of their increasing production of precious metals, pearls and emeralds. Their development and prosperity augmented their importation of merchandise from Spain, which, under the existing system of trade control, must all come from Andalusia in the annual Mainland fleet under convoy to Cartagena and especially to Nombre de Dios. Through this latter neglected settlement passed the major stream of incoming business. There the fleets' cargoes were re-laden into barks for transportation up the Chagre River to a post called Venta Cruces or the House at Cruces, whence this merchandise proceeded by pack-train to Panama.

Venta Cruces, literally the Crosses Roadhouse, was the most important way-station, and the only one mentioned by name, between Nombre de Dios and Panama. It appears not to have been immediately upon the river, yet to have possessed a wharf and warehouses on the water. Doubtless some officials<sup>2</sup> resided there; some soldiers may have been stationed there; and there would have been a few religious to attend to the spiritual needs of a small population inhabiting half a hundred comparatively substantial houses.

Similarly, outgoing merchandise and "the plate," meaning

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Document No. 13.

<sup>2</sup> But no governor; cf. pp. 307-8, *post*. The description is doubtless otherwise correct enough.



gold and silver bullion—crown revenues from the west coast of South America and the private fortunes of individuals (some retiring to Spain, others seeking investment in goods at Nombre de Dios)—all came down to Venta Cruces from Panama by mule-train. From the Venta the bulkier, less valuable freight continued aboard the river barks, along with passengers who preferred the longer, easier water route to the real hardships of overland travel. These passengers frequently carried their metal with them, in coin, plates or bars. But the larger part of this, and especially his majesty's revenues, continued by mule-train from the way-station of Venta Cruces to the coast.

So upon Nombre de Dios by land and by water converged also the great stream of export business, annually, when the fleet appeared; for that fleet, returning to Andalusia, was the only licit means of transportation to Europe. "Loose ships" were occasionally by special permit cleared to cross the Atlantic "outside fleets," and advice-boats usually carried some cargo, as well as despatches, permission so to do apparently constituting an acceptable form of payment for their service. But the vast bulk of trade and commerce between Spain and South America travelled under control between Andalusia and Nombre de Dios, by the Chagre River, through Venta Cruces, to and from Panama. In interfering with the Chagre River craft the French and the English (represented especially by Captain Francis Drake) were now tampering with communications and a trade route which it was vitally important to Spain to maintain and protect.

Concerning Drake's voyage of 1571 the Spanish documents seen have definite information to contribute. Nos. 5-13 have been selected for presentation. They show that in that year Drake reappeared off the Mainland coast, apparently in February, following as usual after the Mainland fleet, which was Diego Flores' third. Obviously, the pirates must work in defiance of the fleet's escorting warships (be these Pedro Menéndez' armada of the guard, as in 1569, or only the captain-general's flagship and the vice-admiral, galleons both, as in 1571), since only when the fleet they convoyed was on

the coast was business lively. Then only, as has been said, was treasure shipped down to galleons ready to receive and protect it. Only then did merchants forgather in numbers, at Nombre de Dios especially, bringing gold and silver to buy goods, of which, if the bullion had not been taken from them *en route* thither, it was still worth while to relieve them as they returned home. Hard metal in bars and disks from the mines, or in nuggets and dust from the placers, and coined money, constituted the best loot—items these of export trade; but the velvets, taffetas, linens, wines, oils, etc., incoming from Spain were not to be despised.

For their defence the "pirates" relied less upon strength (brass artillery, harquebuses, bows, arrows, swords, bucklers) than upon agility—upon their superior seamanship, upon the light draught of their smaller craft<sup>1</sup>, and especially upon oars<sup>2</sup> as against sails. As Documents Nos. 8 to 13 make very evident, they crossed the Atlantic in vessels of size and strength to withstand the voyage; upon arrival in the Indies they anchored these in safe retreats or even destroyed them, so great was sometimes their confidence that they could seize a suitable vessel when the time should come for their return home. The "pirate's" real work was done by small light craft, equipped (in the case of the English, certainly) with oars as well as sails. The documents mentioned (Nos. 8-13) furnish ample evidence that their speed, lesser size, and ability to row when the wind failed, completely discomfited Diego Flores, his galleons, and even his frigates along the Main in 1569-71. The Spaniards were repeatedly out-sailed, out-rowed, and out-mancœuvred.

For before he had been in Nombre de Dios harbour with his third fleet much more than a month<sup>3</sup>, Diego Flores was aware of the presence of Frenchmen—the same who had humiliated him in 1569 by their depredations committed then when he was present and was supposed to suffice for the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Julian Corbett's discussion of types and development of seacraft is pertinent, *op. cit.* II, index, under "Ships."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. especially Document No. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Documents Nos. 6 and 8.

protection of the Main. Only a little later did he hear also of English<sup>1</sup>, from whose ship, stationed like a base at Cativas Headland, its men sallied in a pinnace to plunder.

The French, and possibly these English associated with them, now took Baltazar de Melo's bark—a valuable prize—far up the Chagre River, and it was learned that it had been their purpose to sack the crossroads station itself. This was unprecedented audacity<sup>2</sup>. Diego Flores went out in person from Nombre de Dios with flagship and vice-admiral to chastise such temerity<sup>3</sup>. With its booty the French ship departed, into the north. The English remained, dodging away from the Spaniards into shoal water.

Considerable interest attaches to this particular robbery. These French were under the command of Captain Nicholas des Isles (Bezellin? Leyerre?). Their ship was *L'Esperance* and they were sent out by "Musoir Turbila" to sack the post at Cruces<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 9, item 15. "A thing not heretofore seen or imagined"—Dr Barros to the crown, Panama, May 21, 1571, in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 7 *et seq.* "The general's first sally was fruitless and he returned to port"—The *Audiencia* to the crown, Panama, March 14, 1571, in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13. "The general... went out last week with both galleons after a French corsair ship and a galliot and was fortunate enough to find him, but because one galleon sprung a mast and was so disabled, he could not take him"—Gerónimo Narvaéz de Padilla to the crown, Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571, in *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40. Nevertheless, it was from these galleons that Des Isles fled in such haste that his ship and launch were separated; cf. Estevez' deposition, *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, item 53. Possibly the smaller vessel remained in the Indies for some little time after the ship had gone home.

<sup>4</sup> A very good account of the voyage of *L'Esperance* was given to the *Audiencia* at Panama in his deposition made February 20, 1571, by the negro named Pedro Mandinga, whom the French had carried off in 1569, brought back in 1571 to serve them as a guide to the way-station, and who deserted to the Spaniards when the attacking party drew near the place. Cf. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, legalized copy of this deposition. Originally it was an enclosure in a despatch from the *Audiencia* to the crown, of the same date, now to be found in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 22.

While in France Pedro Mandinga resided, he says, "in a village called 'Punta de Mel (Point-Audemer?),' where there was a great monastery. It was situated between Rouen and "Monfle." His master, "Musoir Turbila," bade him lead Captain des Isles to the House at Cruces. The negro's reward was to be the hand of the serving-maid, Marie, in marriage. But when he had brought the French (and the English?) within five

At the same time it is stated<sup>1</sup> that they were the men who took Diego Polo's bark; and that bark was taken in 1568 by

leagues of the House at Cruces, Pedro Mandinga deserted them and warned the Spaniards. The French then withdrew downstream and at a bend in the river called Los Magos fell upon a Chagre River bark richly laden with silks and some wine, belonging to Baltazar de Melo. This proved a good prize, and when it had been taken, the French ship fled from Diego Flores' punitive expedition, sailing northward along the coast of Central America, where it did further damage to shipping.

These corsairs re-entered France via Honfleur, carrying with them a Spaniard named Vicente Estevez, who eventually returned to Spain, from whom, when he had so returned, the Spanish authorities learned a good deal. Cf. the *legajo* cited, item 53, the Spanish ambassador's memorandum (Paris, September, 1571) concerning French depredations; item 54, Ricardo Caro's deposition, made at Havana, July 23 (?), 1572; and item 60, depositions made by Melo's negroes who deserted the bark after its capture, dated at Nombre de Dios, March 2, 1571.

It would be interesting to identify "Musoir Turbila," who can hardly have been Captain Tutila (Document No. 31) with whom Drake attacked the pack-train at Nombre de Dios in 1573, for in *Sir Francis Drake Revived* (p. 316, *post*) this man is called Captain Tetu, and it is now generally accepted that he was the famous hydrographer, Guillaume Le Testu, whose atlas (*Cosmographie Universelle*) is a treasure preserved in the French Ministry of War, and Le Testu was almost certainly in prison in Flanders at the time *L'Esperance* set sail on this adventure.

There is evidence that a Frenchman whose name is given as Giraldo Tetu was the master or perhaps the pilot of a ship called the *Countess* which at this very time (early spring, 1571) was doing the Spanish damage off Santo Domingo. Cf. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 53, the ambassador's memorandum previously mentioned; item 54, Pedro Morera's deposition made at Havana, July 23 (?), 1572. According to item 57 of this same *legajo* there may have been Englishmen with him. One "Guillermogrin" is mentioned in item 58, i.e. William Green, a captain or pilot. In connection with the seizure of Asensio Hernandez' ship *Nuestra Señora de la Ayuda*, it is there stated that the officer commanding these enemies was Jacques Sores, described as a nephew of Ribaut, to whom most of the crew claimed relationship. Item 59 suggests that this vessel may have been Laudonnière's. Ambassador Alava informed the crown (this *legajo*, Paris, July 1, 1571) that he had just had news that Laudonnière had returned to Normandy with a prize, which seems to have been Hernandez' vessel.

<sup>1</sup> "6. According to further evidence taken in the said city of Nombre de Dios on November 2, 1571, it appears that at that season in the Chagre River certain corsairs (who seem to have been French) took a bark laden with merchandise en route to the House at Cruces, which belonged to Baltazar de Melo, merchant.

"7. According to further evidence taken in the said city of Nombre de Dios on November 1, 1571, it appears that said corsairs (French and (*sic*) English, not stated which) took and looted a frigate which belonged to Diego de Polo"—*A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, item 28, Extract (of depositions not seen).

Paul Blondel alias Captain Bland, Hawkins' associate upon his third voyage. If, then, these English had a hand in Melo's despoiling (as they may not have had, but probably did), here we have Francis Drake again in close association with the very Frenchman who suffered even more than he at San Juan de Ulua—since there Bland lost his *Don de Dieu*, while Drake got off with the *Judith*. For the English ship anchored at Cativa[s] Headland<sup>1</sup> was the *Swan*, Francis Drake commanding.

"The year 1568 Paul Blondel of Saint Valerie in Lower Normandy, with a vessel called the *Don de Dieu*, off the Mainland coast seized a frigate laden with much gold and silver and other jewels of great value, belonging in part to Juan Ortiz de Zarate....

"At the time deponent had cleared from the harbour of Nombre de Dios in another frigate, his own, also carrying gold and silver for delivery to the second fleet which Diego Flores de Valdes brought over, which lay at anchor in the harbour of Cartagena. Deponent cleared in company and convoy of a *cayman* belonging to Diego Polo, government notary of Cartagena, which also carried gold and silver and other jewels to a value of over 200,000 *pesos*. Deponent's cargo was 300,000 *pesos* in silver bars. In the ports it is always known what each ship carries, because the cargo is delivered against public reckoning and receipt.

"And as they sailed on a course for the harbour of Cartagena, the said Frenchman came out to them and took the said *cayman* with a ship and a shallop rowing twenty-four oars. He pursued the said *cayman* until he came alongside and looted it, twenty Frenchmen having boarded. This witness saw, and they chased him till they bottled him up in the town of Tolu, and so witness escaped from them; and this is how he knows"—Rodrigo Caro, deposition, Havana, July 23, 1572, in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 54.

"[In] the year 1568 Paul Blondel of Saint Valerie in Lower Normandy, commanding a vessel called the *Don de Dieu*, looted a frigate carrying a large quantity of gold and silver and other jewels of great value, of which the *Adelantado* Juan Ortiz de Zarate was part owner.

"We have here a weak lot of evidence furnished by Seville which deals not only with the said French pirate but also mentions others, Englishmen, and this weakens the case....

"The *Adelantado* Zarate might send a power-of-attorney to negotiate and collect from Paul Blondel of Saint Valerie what he stole of him, and to treat with Juan Diaz, his Portuguese pilot, and consorts. Further, it will be necessary to send a bit of evidence of the robbery, which he can draw up with two or three of his suite who accompanied him, without mentioning English ships or other person except Paul Blondel. The evidence he did send talks now of English and next of French"—The Spanish ambassador's memorandum (Paris, 1571) in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22, *Patronato* 267, 53, pp. 4 and 12.

<sup>1</sup> See outline map. Cativa[s] Headland was Point San Blas; but apparently Las Cativas meant the islands of Las Mulatas Archipelago, extending southward along the coast.

Nor, as has been shown, does the interest which attaches to this incident end here. Melo was robbed of "velvettes and taffitas" (which came from Spain in the fleet<sup>1</sup>). Their value was so great that the affair created unusual interest and indignation. In fine, this was just such a robbery, in the same place (the Chagre River) as the Ashmole MS. charges against Drake, but ascribes to the year 1570—when, excepting at precisely this time, which was still that year, by English reckoning, there was no fleet to have brought over such merchandise in quantity. And just as it must be left an open question whether the date given by that manuscript should be interpreted to read 1570/71 (leaving us, then, with no information whatever concerning a voyage in 1570 proper), so the documents here presented leave it an open question whether or not Drake arrived in time for a share in the spoiling of Melo in 1570/71, with considerable weight of evidence that he did.

In any event, after the French had taken Melo's fine silks and velvets, their ship made off; but the English remained. Documents Nos. 5 and 6 show "Captain Francis" in action. These documents constitute the first clear and unobstructed view yet obtained of Drake in the Caribbean and to them the student is referred. Surely comment is superfluous.

Against these English, with whom some French may still have been associated (but not Captain Nicholas des Isles himself, for he had certainly sailed homeward), the Spaniards sent out frigates<sup>2</sup>. These were more manageable craft than galleons, yet they proved equally unavailing against the "luck<sup>3</sup>" and celerity of the enemy. It seems that Drake actually went still farther up the river (after the Melo incident) and plundered the wharf itself at Cruces, as well as other craft upon the river<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, since the merchandise which

<sup>1</sup> Similar merchandise brought from the Orient by the galleon trade crossed Mexico, not the isthmus.

<sup>2</sup> Documents 7, 8, 13. *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, the *Audiencia* to the crown, March 12, 1571, for mention of efforts to trap the enemy in the Chagre River after the attack on the Cruces wharf.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 9, items 10 and 11. Cf. Corbett, *op. cit.* 1, p. 183 n. The date 1571 is correct.

the fleet had brought must proceed to its destination, a dozen or so barks with their cargoes sailed under escort from Nombre de Dios for the Chagre. Between Puerto Bello and Bastimentos Islands<sup>1</sup> Drake's pinnace took them, transferred the cargoes of all to two, and with these withdrew to the base-ship at Cativas Headland<sup>2</sup>.

In this vicinity a few days later the enemy took a despatch boat<sup>3</sup> which had cleared from Cartagena<sup>4</sup>, killed its owner, subjected to insult and humiliation a friar (who happened to be a passenger), seized the cargo and destroyed the mail, except the royal despatches. These, with the survivors (some wounded) who had been set ashore on an islet, were fetched to Nombre de Dios by the middle of May when, it would seem, Drake cleared from the Mainland coast. The 1571 voyage was unquestionably a fairly profitable adventure.

From it the man who was to become one of England's greatest naval heroes returned home with hands reddened. This, with the Spanish documents in view, it is as impossible to disprove as it is unnecessary. It does not appear that Drake and the English generally were wantonly cruel. The French were so; and defended their cruelty by reminding the Spaniards that in Florida Pedro Menéndez had given cause<sup>5</sup>. Neither does it appear, however, that Drake respected human life or property rights when they stood in his way to his object; and that object, it must be repeated, was to enrich and advance himself as well as to wreak vengeance and weaken a national enemy. To be sure, the excommunication of

<sup>1</sup> Off Manzanillo Point.

<sup>2</sup> Documents No. 9, item 12; Nos. 10, 12, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Documents No. 9, item 13; Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 152. This vessel had sailed from Cartagena but was taken nearer to Nombre de Dios.

<sup>5</sup> While Menéndez did not, as has been too long taught, pledge the French his word to spare their lives, nor does it seem possible that they could have understood him to do so, his fanatical slaughter of so many helpless men, who were by circumstances compelled to surrender to him, was fully recognized by Spanish colonials to have been at the least very unwise, in that it laid them open to reprisals. Time and again colonial governors excused themselves from obeying repeated orders to execute foreign prisoners, on the very rational ground that the colonies were unable to defend themselves against the prisoners' compatriots who, hearing of such execution, might deal as harshly by defenceless Spaniards.

Elizabeth (1570) and the Ridolfi plot (1571) were embittering the Anglo-Spanish quarrel and especially accentuating its religious aspect; but it is difficult to imagine that Drake, presently exhibiting a quoit of Spanish gold as evidence of a successful voyage, was at the moment weighing the reformation against the counter-reformation<sup>1</sup>! In the opinion of his own people and of his own time, Drake's conduct was meritorious. Why measure the man by any other standard?

His 1571 voyage made Drake's name (*el capitán Francisco*) known and feared on the Spanish Main. The seizure of barks far up the Chagre River was serious, less in the immediate loss inflicted than in its implication of coming events, which the Spaniards appreciated to the full<sup>2</sup>.

Drake had learned the Chagre River; and never again made much use of the stream. He had learned the purposes and plans, acquired the manners, and at times adopted the methods of the best (or the worst!) of the Huguenot privateers. It does not appear, however, that in 1571 Drake made any real acquaintance with the 'maroons. If he had come, as is authoritatively stated<sup>3</sup>, "to gaine . . . intelligences," his conduct of his next (1572) voyage suggests that he did not obtain all the information it would have been advisable for him to possess. In fine, judged by his 1571 voyage alone, Francis Drake does not appear any abler captain or more important than other, to-day unidentified, Englishmen who were at the time making voyages to the Indies similar to his. Documents Nos. 14-16 concern such.

The three ships there mentioned would seem to have been Sir William Winter's<sup>4</sup>, which had left England before the end of March, 1571, following, evidently, the usual course along the Main, with a call at Jamaica<sup>5</sup> and home by way of

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 147-8, 187. Cf. p. 321, *post.*

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 13.

<sup>3</sup> p. 254, *post.*

<sup>4</sup> *Spanish Calendar*, II, pp. 294-5, 300, 339, 353-4.

<sup>5</sup> "And another corsair, name unknown, except that he was an Englishman, was off the island of Jamaica with three ships belonging to George and William Winter, gentlemen, and looted and burned a vessel belonging to Hernan Ruiz, burgher of Seville, and committed other damages and depredations; and of what he carried off to England it is known that one



the Florida coast, where they attacked Saint Augustine at the very end of that year or the commencement of 1572. They were driven off by the *Adelantado* Pedro Menéndez himself, who, surviving shipwreck and Indians and "led...by a miracle," arrived, with his customary strenuousness, just in the nick of time.

Drake's next voyage (1572-3)—probably his sixth—was his first made in independent command<sup>1</sup>. It is the English account of this voyage (*Sir Francis Drake Revived*), compiled by Philip Nichols, preacher, first published by Drake's nephew in 1626, which is appended as item No. 1, Part II, of the present volume, that the reader may compare it closely with the Spanish documents (Nos. 17-31) which parallel it.

No. 17 bears out its account of Drake's arrival in the sheltered harbour on the Main which had been his lair in other years, and corroborates the incident of Ransé's appearance with his prizes, and the busy setting up of his "dainty pinnaces." When these were ready, the English bore down upon Nombre de Dios, approaching cautiously that no warning might be given.

In these Spanish documents (see especially No. 23) as in the English narrative, we hear the English drums and trumpets sound through the Spanish town at dead of night, we see the startled residents wake to the glare of fire-pikes—to find John Drake and Oxenham in possession of the market-place. Again the church bell clamours its alarm and cannot be stilled, while through the darkness men, women and children flee—with what an outcry and turmoil we may imagine—out through the Panama gate into the open country. But here, too, we see the Spaniards rally—a dozen, two dozen—to face the enemy in the streets and break into the market-place, to make a final desperate stand there. Again we see the trumpeter fall, whose silence discomfited the English. Drake

negro is in possession of 'Juan Bautista de Sant Bitores' and another in that of the Earl of 'Arfort' [Hertford?]. . . —*A. de I.* 2-5-2/21, *Patronato* 266, item 1, extract of evidence assembled in the Indies concerning depredations (English).

<sup>1</sup> Hakluyt correctly calls this "the first voyage attempted...by... Francis Drake himself. . ."—*Principal Navigations*, x, pp. 75-6.

was forced to retire to his pinnaces, wounded and defeated, his carefully planned enterprise gone all awry.

No wonder that, faced with such movement and such colour in these old papers (English and Spanish alike), those who imagine that to be accurate history must also be "as dry as dust" may have inclined to question the validity of such a story as *Sir Francis Drake Revived*; but when, after 358 years the very Spaniards he fought step forth from their own documents to support his story, even to such detail as one trumpeter stretched lifeless in the market-place of Nombre de Dios that night, not much ground remains upon which to base rejection of that amazing little book.

This, "the family narrative", states that the purpose of the 1572 voyage was to sack Nombre de Dios. The miscarriage of his assault upon the town had begun Drake's first independent undertaking most inauspiciously, and his misfortunes continued and augmented through the year 1572.

It is human to imagine the career of such a figure as Drake became to have consisted of triumph after triumph; whereas perhaps the hero's very greatness lies in his ability to wrest victory out of defeat after defeat. The story told in *Sir Francis Drake Revived* is a tale of failure after failure; but the whole is so gilded by the glow of final success that the fact that it is such may too easily pass unobserved.

In August (1572) Drake lay at Port Plenty, Isle of Pines (Mainland coast), determinedly scheming how to "make" a voyage which had failed. Fearing the issue, Ransie withdrew from the agreement he had entered into, and sailed away.

Now Drake considered the 'maroons and listened to suggestions from one of them, Diego, who had attached himself to the English. He sent his brother John with Hixon to reconnoitre the Chagre River and bring him late news of Cruces. Undoubtedly Drake was pondering the notion that a raid upon that post would be profitable; and surely he was endeavouring to get into communication with the outlaw blacks, of whom there were three bodies<sup>2</sup>. First, a small

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *A. de I.* 2-4-1/12, *Patronato* 234, 6, 1, sworn statements made at Panama, August 30, 1580. Cf. p. 259, *post*.

number in the vicinity of Panama who, as highwaymen, preyed upon land traffic between that port and Cruces. Already they had attacked pack-trains between Cruces and Panama. Second, the more important band of Puerto Bello outlaws who harassed even the city of Nombre de Dios itself and worried all its vicinity. A third still larger body of blacks lived in the mountains of Vallano, in the southern part of the isthmus, a region vast, inaccessible, unknown.

Meanwhile, Drake himself turned to Cartagena and apparently would have taken and sacked that city had he been able. He found it warned against him and perforce contented himself with prizes out of the harbour<sup>1</sup>. It was now obvious that his presence had been advertised up and down the Main. As he failed in his primary purpose (at Nombre de Dios), Drake failed again at Cartagena, and was obliged to withdraw to a "convenient road, out of all trade," on the Acla coast.

In the first half of September Drake's newly trimmed pinnaces were seeking and obtaining food supplies and information on the Magdalena River<sup>2</sup>. By the end of the month the English were in touch with the 'maroons, who led them to a new lair (where they built Fort Diego, on Slaughter island, within San Blas gulf). Drake was now obliged to let four or five months pass before he could expect either the end of the rainy season or the arrival of the fleet from Spain,

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, item 28, paragraph 4; 2-5-2/21, *Patronato* 266, item 1, extracts previously cited. "...Two English ships ...three pinnaces...have done and are doing much damage both at Cartagena and at Nombre de Dios....They have looted and burned many vessels, both frigates and large ships, which has been a very great pity; and from the harbour itself of Cartagena they cut out two or three of them, which they treated in similar fashion. All this coast is terrorized...."—Luis de Rojas, Santa Marta, September 30, 1572, in *A. de I.* 72-4-18, Santa Fé 49. Governor Rojas added that he himself was sorely beset by enemies, both by land and by sea. The warlike aborigines were in revolt and even as he wrote Drake was approaching. The town of Santa Marta consisted of some ten households only at this time and yet presently Drake (hungry, cold and wet)—"storme without and want within"—was driven off by Governor Rojas' well-directed resistance (cf. pp. 288-9, *post*). Cf. *A. de I.* 72-4-18, Santa Fé 49, *información*, March 26, 1573.

<sup>2</sup> "...He went up the Magdalena River as far as Las Barrancas and it was understood he sacked certain houses there"—*A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, item 28, the extract previously cited.

both signals for business to bestir itself by land and water, and especially for gold and silver to move down from Panama. Apparently, at long last, Drake was learning the true situation he must meet; at considerable cost to himself and his men he was gaining those "intelligences" he had not obtained in 1571.

During this lull, Drake sought to do more or less honest business: in the first half of October he returned to Cartagena, where now he proffered for sale or barter tin, pewter, cloth and other merchandise. Cartagena dared have none of him: "...The King [Philip] had forbidden to traffique with any forraigne Nation...no hope remained of any purchase to bee had in this place any longer...<sup>1</sup>." Wherefore Drake perforce resumed the pillaging of coastwise traders. To the end of the year, with his pinnaces, he harried the easterly coast—Cartagena, Santa Marta, Curaçao—with varying weather and with varying luck. In December he returned to his base at Fort Diego, only to find John Drake dead. In January an epidemic (yellow fever?) broke out among his men, and among others his brother Joseph succumbed.

But Diego Flores with his fourth Mainland fleet had arrived at Nombre de Dios<sup>2</sup>. The time to strike had come. Accompanied by Pedro Mandinga<sup>3</sup> leading a party of thirty negroes, Francis Drake and seventeen other Englishmen

<sup>1</sup> pp. 285 and 288, *post*.

<sup>2</sup> This fleet entered Nombre de Dios on January 5, 1573, and cleared for Spain in May following. Cf. p. xxv, *ante*, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 16, *post*. Mandinga is a tribal, not a true, surname. This Pedro Mandinga is not necessarily the man whom the French carried off (p. xxxi, *ante*, note 4), who deserted them on approaching the House at Cruces; nor necessarily Drake's "cheefe Symeron" (p. 297, *post*); nor necessarily the Mandinga who presently proved no traitor to the English in Oxenham's extremity (pp. 217, 240, *post*). But the probabilities are that he was one and the same and a leader among the Nombre de Dios or Panama *cimarrones*, as distinct from the Vallano blacks whose king is said to have been Juan Vaquero (Documents Nos. 40, 69). A river and a town well within the Gulf of San Blas still bear his name and suggest that close by was Drake's Fort Diego, Slaughter Island, and the new town some distance from the coast on the river, to which the English returned after their unsuccessful attempt on Venta Cruces. Further, it would be logical to suppose that it was through the pass which exists near here (Río Diablo pass) that Drake went into the interior, since his destination was Panama, to the north-west.

marched inland, into the *cimarron* country, upon an almost incredible exploit.

There is no reason to doubt the story of this adventure as recounted in *Sir Francis Drake Revived*, excepting some of the dates there given; these<sup>1</sup> seem to have been furnished from a memory of the events which erred little even here. For instance, Drake must have gone inland in January, not February, since Spanish documents show that the attack he made on the pack-train occurred at the end of January<sup>2</sup>. Spanish state papers and the geography of the isthmus can be cited to prove the narrative's most extraordinary details. To wit, its description of the 'maroon village which the English visited is not at variance with the Spanish accounts, little as the student might expect to find there not naked, dirty savages, but clean and tidy negroes fairly well dressed—in garments they obtained from corsair friends<sup>3</sup>. The "gallant gentleman" who had attacked<sup>4</sup> this village some little time before was Esteban de Trejo, concerning whose campaign full information is available at Seville. There is nothing impossible or even improbable in the most famous incident of all<sup>5</sup>—when Drake and Oxenham planned together to plough with English bows the great Pacific over which they gazed from a 'maroon "crow's nest" in a tree top, upon one of the heights from which both oceans are still<sup>6</sup> to be seen by

<sup>1</sup> pp. 294, 295, note 1, *post*.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Document No. 4, for statement that the negroes stole clothing; *A. de I.* 73-4-6, Santa Fé 37, Bahamonde de Lugo to the crown, Cartagena, May 29, 1573, for assertion that the *cimarrones* of Darien and Acla obtained clothing from foreigners in payment for their services as guides, etc.

<sup>4</sup> p. 298, *post*. *A. de I.* 109-6-11, Panama 375, Trejo's commission, dated Panama, November 19, 1569. Cf. Document No. 4. "As to the matter of the *cimarrones*, Captain Trejo has made certain incursions, taken some of them prisoners, and dispersed them.... The *Audiencia* passes sentence of death on those captured..."—Licentiate Vera to the crown, Panama, November 20, 1573, in *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, etc., etc.

<sup>5</sup> p. 300, *post*.

<sup>6</sup> "Once, when in Darien I was travelling through that part of the range which dominates the watershed to the Chucunaque river, north of the village of Yaviza, being in a deep forest of mighty trees, a Cuna Indian with me invited me to climb to the top of one of those great monarchs of the virgin wilderness. I complied with no little difficulty; and when I reached the top, and looked about, what was my amazement to see on

travellers adventurous enough to follow in the footsteps of these two Englishmen<sup>1</sup>.

What is, however, almost inconceivable is the temper of men who, discomfited at every turn, having to little or no profit suffered what Drake and his companions had endured, now ventured upon the most daring attack ever made upon Spanish-American treasure. That they held to their determination is indisputable evidence of the magnetic quality of Drake's personality, and of his unbreakable resolution to return home successful from his first independent voyage into the Indies.

Documents Nos. 19-22, 26 and 28 relate the assault upon the pack-train near the House at Cruces and the raid upon that way-station. Apparently the events occurred as the English version of the matter says that they did. With their negro confederates, Drake's men lay in ambush for the mules laden with treasure, and near Cruces attacked the first of them as they came down the road from Panama in the night (travelling in the darkness to avoid the heat of day). But the train carrying gold was warned, probably just as the English text relates. Again was Drake defeated and his position rendered dangerous in the extreme. His shortest way to the coast lay directly through the Spanish post at Cruces, and therefore he now stormed that place.

one horizon the blue line of the Northern or Caribbean Sea and on the other the greenish line of the Southern or Pacific, washing the south coast of the Isthmus of Panama. Few white men indeed have beheld this spectacle but the view is there to be beheld, as I myself saw it"—Ernesto Restrepo Tirado, to the editor, Seville, June, 1931. Sr Restrepo Tirado is a former president of the Academy of History of Colombia, and corresponding member of the Academies of Venezuela, Ecuador, Cartagena de Indias, and Spain (Madrid), etc., etc. Fernandez Duro's scepticism on this point betrays his ignorance of the country (*Armada Española*, Madrid, 1896, II, p. 343, n. 1).

<sup>1</sup> Obviously the point from which Drake saw both seas must have been nearer to Panama than is Yaviza. The Society's assistant secretary, Mr Beharrell, in the Map Room of the British Museum called my attention to the map of the Isthmus of Panama in Jeffery's *West Indian Atlas*, London, 1775, whereon is indicated (south-east of Almirante Bay, south-west of Veragua) a mountain from which it is stated that both seas may be seen. This, again, is surely not the point from which Drake and Oxenham viewed them. Evidently the sight is to be seen from various points.

At Cruces the English and the 'maroons inflicted upon the Spaniards considerable loss in life and much more in property. "All their demand was 'Gold! Gold!'" Apparently they obtained some booty which they could carry off, but most of it they could not transport and so destroyed. Before the end of February Drake was back upon the water. He had accomplished nothing—the golden recompense, which he was determined to have, had once more eluded him. He comforted himself as best he could with prizes taken at sea<sup>2</sup>; at this season they were sometimes valuable. And with "a Genoway pilot" (who may possibly have been the Portuguese Lopez<sup>3</sup> Vaez who later informed Hakluyt of other matters) he seems to have approached Veragua with intent to attack<sup>4</sup>, its gold mines being the lure; from which purpose he desisted when signals fired ashore informed him that the place was not to be surprised.

In March Captain Le Testu<sup>5</sup> appeared. The Spanish heard<sup>6</sup> that when from a prize this Frenchman learned Drake's whereabouts, he sought him out in evil humour, "but in the end they made friends and entered into an agreement." His temper is comprehensible if perchance this man had himself crossed this year especially to raid the post at Cruces where Nicholas of the Isles had failed, only to find that Drake's fiasco there had made any such enterprise impossible.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, 22, Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the crown, May 2, 1573.

<sup>2</sup> "... Certain English corsairs with two ships and two pinnaces have been off this coast, doing heavy damage; and three times we have gone out after them, but have been unable to find them, because the coast affords many hiding places. Some remedy must be applied, for this land is so terrified that most of the inhabitants of this town will abandon it when this fleet clears"—Gerónimo Narvaéz de Padilla to the crown, *Nombre de Dios*, February 20, 1573.

<sup>3</sup> No. 2, Part II, and Document No. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Document No. 29 with pp. 314-5, *post*.

<sup>5</sup> See p. xxxi, *ante*, note 4. It seems certain that he was sent out by Philip Strozzi, then in retirement at Mole in Normandy. Cf. *La vie, mort, et tombeau... haut et puissant seigneur Philippe de Strozzi...*, Paris, 1608, reprinted by Cimber, L., et Danjou, F., in *Archives Curieuses de l'Histoire de France*, Paris, 1835, pp. 434 *et seq.*, where he is called "le capitaine Testu, très excellent pilot."

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 24.

"The family narrative" (*Sir Francis Drake Revived*) admits that the English feared the Frenchman's superior numbers; yet it was these reinforcements which enabled Drake to enter upon a final desperate enterprise which without French help he could hardly have attempted, so grievously had his own strength been depleted by the fever epidemic among his men.

Again, the English narrative of the bold attack which English, French and *cimarrones* now made upon the pack-trains in the immediate vicinity of Nombre de Dios itself is accurate, as Documents Nos. 24-28, 30 and 31 bear witness. No. 31 is especially fine.

No. 24 shows that now, at Nombre de Dios, Drake succeeded in carrying out the plan which one man's drunken impetuosity had thwarted at Venta Cruces, for now the English and their allies lay quietly beside the highway, while mules bearing merchandise of lesser value passed; but when those carrying silver and gold came up they sprang forth, beat off drivers and guards, ripped open cases and made off with as much loot as they could carry. They buried the silver but with the gold raced for the coast where, luckily for them, they found their pinnaces.

Meanwhile, at news of what had occurred, the men of Nombre de Dios swarmed forth, and sought to follow the robbers through the bush, in a storm at night. They took prisoner one Frenchman, but not Captain Le Testu, who met his fate when they encountered him wounded in the woods. They recovered most of the buried silver, but with the gold (eventually divided equally between them) the French and English got safely away.

Now indeed could Drake thank God that his voyage was "made." Now could he depart for England "passing hard by Carthagea, in the sight of all the Fleete, with a Flag of Saint George in the maine top of our Fregat, with silke streamers and ancients downe to the water, sayling forward with a large wind...<sup>1</sup>." Drake was leaving behind him in their graves half of the comrades with whom he had set out, two brothers among them, and the French captain to whom

<sup>1</sup> p. 323, *post*.



in no small part he owed his immediate success, but he had accomplished his purpose, no matter how or at what cost, and from his first independent voyage he was indeed "sayling forward with a large wind..." This may not have been immediately apparent if, upon his arrival in England in August, 1573, he was compelled to keep under cover "till he had obtained his pardon<sup>1</sup>" for making this voyage without any commission<sup>2</sup>.

Not "luck," nor even ability, but indomitable British determination had wrought victory out of a year's mis-carriages. Drake left his enemies poor, humiliated and helpless in their consternation<sup>3</sup>. As for himself, he was "made" in the making of the 1572 adventure. For the next thirteen years he left the Indies to lesser men; when at length he returned it was not as "a meane subject" but as an admiral commanding the ships of his queen, and then he came not to barter or to loot for private profit but to wage the war of a rising Protestant nation against a great Catholic empire, the impotence of which he was to make manifest.

Documents Nos. 32 and 33 concern some of those lesser men who followed in Drake's wake and are yet to be identified. In the summer of 1574 "Captain John Noble, Englishman,"

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* I, pp. 190-2. "...Having advised certain persons that he was returning, they consulted with the council or some of its members; and having received their pledge and assurance he entered Plymouth. From which it was deduced that some of the queen of England's councillors have a share in these robberies..."—*A. de I.* 2-5-2/21, *Patronato* 266, item 1, *S.P. Spain*, XVIII.

<sup>2</sup> Drake certainly had no commission. Cf. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, 14, 20, Pedro de Zubiaurre to..., Seville, September 11, 1573, and draft of *cédula* empowering him to compound (acting for Spanish owners) for the merchandise stolen in the Indies by *capitan françes drag* and his brothers. This document states that their vessels were cleared without the queen's license and enclosed a draft (Latin), Philip to Elizabeth. These papers are undated, but that they were written in 1575 seems likely inasmuch as in *A. de I.* 140-7-32 there is a recommendation from the council to the king dated January 24, 1575, that Zubiaur be empowered so to act.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 24. Nevertheless, the Spaniards were not inactive. For measures taken against the *cimarrones* see *A. de I.* 109-1-1, I, f. 8 reverse; 69-2-21, Panama 11, ff. 291, 119 *et seq.*, 284, 212 *et seq.*, 72 reverse, 24 reverse; 2-4-1/12, *Patronato* 234, Tristan de Silva Campofrio and Gonzalo de Carbajal to the crown, Panama, December 30, 1573.

was evidently making a voyage of the usual pattern<sup>1</sup>. He hid his ship off the Veragua coast, near El Escudo, and from it as a base with two launches scoured the coast, seizing frigates and barks off Cativas Headland and the Chagre. All seems to have been going well until June when, being attacked by a frigate sent out by the governor of Veragua, panic seized the English, who deserted their vessel and so delivered themselves and John Noble to the hangman's noose. The Spaniards brought in the English ship, which was found where its captain said that he had left it; and so ended his adventure, ignominiously.

Documents Nos. 34 and 35 would seem to refer to a voyage made by Gilbert Horseley concerning which (previously unknown) Dr Williamson<sup>2</sup> recently found information in contemporary records of the admiralty court. Like Drake and others, Horseley was closely associated with the French, particularly Captain Sylvester, who with his ship "carrying a hundred fighting men" is said to have cleared from Havre in September of 1574<sup>3</sup>. These French attacked Veragua in

<sup>1</sup> "Captain John Noble, Englishman, last year, 1574, hid his ship in a harbour near the city of Veragua and from there scoured the coast with two launches, and came to the Chagre River and Cabeza de Cativas (San Blas), where he took many frigates and barks, and conveyed the pillage to the said ship, which he kept hidden; and he burned the frigates he took.

"This deponent knows because near the mouth of the Chagre River the said corsair John Noble took a frigate belonging to deponent and his brother, Gerónimo Gutierrez de Casas, burgher of this city of Nombre de Dios, whom he held a prisoner until one day in a storm the bark and the corsairs' frigate sank. Deponent's brother and three or four of the English were drowned, and the rest escaped in a small boat which they had tied to the stern.

"And the armada's brigantine which went out from this city in search of said corsair took and captured the said Captain John Noble, Englishman, and brought him to this city; who admitted that his ship was hidden at El Escudo. This was found to be true because people from Veragua, who had gone after it, found the said ship and brought it in"—Alonso Gutierrez de Casas, deposition, Nombre de Dios, April 27, 1575, in *A. de I.* 69-3-1, Panama 32, 756, pp. 96-97. See also *A. de I.* 42-6-2/6 (iv, f. 216), *Contratación* 5168, House of Trade to the crown, Seville, June 22, 1575, transmitting the substance of Vice-Admiral Francisco Carreño's report in the matter.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* pp. 297-8.

<sup>3</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-1, Panama 32, 756, p. 88, Alonso Gutierrez de Casas, deposition. Cf. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20, *Patronato* 265, item 24, Guaras to the Comendador de Castilla, from London, February 13, 1574, mention of

December of that year<sup>1</sup>. If Horseley cleared from Plymouth in November, 1574, it does not appear that he could have been concerned in that attack. It was supposed that upon this occasion negroes who deserted<sup>2</sup> to the French informed them of vessels coming down from the Nicaragua settlements, whereupon (or so it was stated<sup>3</sup>) "the said corsairs . . . divided their forces . . . endeavouring to join with the *cimarrones*," and so went "to the Desaguadero (San Juan River) . . . to take the frigates coming from there. . . ." This was occurring in January–March, 1575; and Horseley doubtless arrived just in time to assist Captain Sylvester to carry out his plan.

Williamson states<sup>4</sup> that the English "got into touch with the 'Sem Rownes' . . ." With a Portuguese pilot (probably Marqués) and accompanied by Frenchmen (who were recognized as those who had been at Veragua in December), they ascended the San Juan River and possibly would have attacked the settlements in Nicaragua had they not encountered the frigates coming down, which they took<sup>5</sup>.

In its audacity and success rather than for the "scantiness of the means employed"<sup>6</sup> this incursion into the interior of Nicaragua is comparable to Drake's most daring exploits, as Dr Williamson well observes. Audacious it was, but the artillery Horseley had (three pieces or seven), his small arms and force of twenty-five men, were formidable as against unarmed coastwise trading vessels, ungarrisoned isolated settlements, and undisciplined landsmen taken by surprise. Daring it was, certainly, in Horseley to venture into the San Juan River (which, unlike the sea, kept no safe retreat open for him), and only because it threatened no major trade route

vessels fitting for the Indies, some from Plymouth ("Louis Larderer"), a Portuguese pilot, French also to go from Dieppe and Havre. "God confound them all!" Cf. *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 485.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69–3–1, Panama 32, 756, depositions taken at Nombre de Dios, April–May, 1575.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* According to persons who had been present in Veragua at the time of the attack.

<sup>3</sup> *A. de I.* 2–5–1/20, *Patronato* 265, the *Audiencia* to Alvaro Manrique de Lara in demand that he send a naval force against these enemies, Panama, February 17, 1575.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 34.

<sup>6</sup> Williamson, *op. cit.* p. 299.

did his appearance there arouse less alarm among Spaniards than Drake's at Venta Cruces. While Horseley's voyage was doubtless profitable (witness the lamentations<sup>1</sup> of the Spaniards who were relieved of merchandise, and of silver and gold in bars, quoits, plate and coin), yet neither in Nicaragua nor at Veragua or Trujillo, could he have expected to find treasure in such bulk as Drake found it along the highway from Panama to Nombre de Dios.

From the San Juan River the French returned to Veragua. Presumably the English went with them, so reinforcing them that now the town was taken; and here acts of exceptional and cowardly cruelty were committed<sup>2</sup>. In April, 1575, conducting himself in a manner which seems to bear out the Spaniards' charges that he had a hand in them, Horseley was threatening Puerto Caballos and Trujillo, having evidently turned his bows toward home. "...now passably rich... (he) arrived at Plymouth with fifteen of his men in June 1575<sup>3</sup>."

Enemies were numerous along the Main in 1576, and among them were both Oxenham and Barker. Documents Nos. 36 to 70 inclusive bear upon their respective expeditions. Nos. 36, 41, 45-47, 49, 50, 55, 57, 59, 60 and 65 shed new light upon Barker's adventure. Document No. 37 furnishes the names of men involved in it and suggests what spoils were taken and how divided. Some of these same documents and the rest, to the end of the book, also from various points of view relate the disaster which befell John Oxenham, his English followers and his black allies.

There is no English version of Oxenham's story except Richard Hawkins', which is No. 4, Part II, of this present volume. Apparently his expedition had no survivors. Indeed, nothing has hitherto been known of it beyond the accounts furnished by the Portuguese pilot Lopez Vaz which Hakluyt published, one of which is herewith reprinted as No. 2, Part II. Therefore the editor feels justified in proffering in these Spanish documents considerable material relating to the

<sup>1</sup> The *información*, depositions cited, *A. de I.* 69-3-1, Panama 32, 756.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Also, the city of Veragua to the crown, same *legajo*, 776, April 13, 1575; and omitted portions of Document No. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Williamson, *op. cit.* p. 298.

matter, most interesting of which is doubtless Oxenham's own account contained in his two depositions, Documents Nos. 52 and 70.

Although No. 38 affords a description of Oxenham, these documents contain no evidence as to who he was<sup>1</sup>. It is plain from the text of *Sir Francis Drake Revived* that he served in posts of responsibility under Drake in 1572 and was then the trusted comrade and kindred spirit with whom the captain could lay plans "to sayle . . . an English ship" in the Pacific<sup>2</sup>. This feat Oxenham was to accomplish first; and to have achieved it seems to have afforded him a satisfaction he did not hide<sup>3</sup>. He himself tells us only that he was a native of Plymouth, and that he cleared from England on April 9, 1576<sup>4</sup>, without official backing, in his own ship.

Hardly less interest attaches to John Butler, Oxenham's second in command, who would seem to have been "the Irishman named Captain John" of whom Antonio de Guaras wrote in mid-February, 1576, that he had then recently returned from fifteen years' residence in the Indies and was encouraging the fitting out of an expedition thither with promises of much treasure to be had there<sup>5</sup>. The Spaniards considered Butler, whom they called Chalona, to be the prime mover of the enterprise and the most dangerous member of it.

Clearing, as said, in April, Oxenham seems to have steered for Veragua. At the end of May in that year (1576) Captain-General Erasso's armada brought Captain-General Francisco de Luxan's Mainland fleet from Cartagena to Nombre de Dios, and at the time a patrol was sent out under Alvaro

<sup>1</sup> Fernandez Duro, *op. cit.* II, p. 343, states that he was Drake's cook.

<sup>2</sup> p. 300, *post.* Given the dates of Oxenham's departure from England and of Drake's on his voyage of circumnavigation (April, 1576; November, 1577), this statement that Drake especially acquainted Oxenham with his purpose to enter the Pacific merits attention. No entirely satisfactory explanation has yet been offered either of Drake's original plan for that voyage or of the peculiar course he steered. It would be interesting to know whether Drake expected to find Oxenham in the Pacific or on the isthmus when, in 1578-9, he sailed northward along the west coast of South America.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 52.

<sup>5</sup> *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 526.

Flores to reconnoitre the coast; but it discovered no enemies nor news of any<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, before the end of July there was report of one such who boasted<sup>2</sup> that he had been present at the attack on Nombre de Dios, at the sack of Venta Chagre (Cruces), and at the affair at Campos river. Some supposed this was Captain Francis [Drake], returned again; in reality, it was Oxenham.

Leaving his ship hidden in a harbour west of Cartagena, in two pinnaces, which he had brought from England in sections and now set up, Oxenham seems for some time after his arrival off the Main to have preyed on traffic there<sup>3</sup>. Ill-starred from the start, he was unsuccessful<sup>4</sup> in his attempt on Veragua, and apparently profited nothing from a fight with a frigate of Erasso's armada, unless it were to have inspired in Alvaro Flores' reconnoitring vessels a disinclination to seek him out, that June of 1576, when he lay in the vicinity of El Escudo.

At that very time, according to Hakluyt<sup>5</sup>, Andrew Barker was sailing from England with his two vessels, the *Ragged Staff* and the *Bear*, Philip Roche being master of the one and William Coxe of the other. Hakluyt says that Barker's purpose was to "recompense" himself for losses inflicted by the Inquisition at Seville, and Documents Nos. 55 and 63 suggest that in the Indies Barker publicly announced this reason for his voyage.

"Arrived happily at the Island of Trinidad," his expedition worked westward along the coast, with varying luck. All in all, it is to be deduced that Barker accomplished a good deal toward recovering his loss "of the Spaniards themselves," in the shape of those "barres of gold, lingots of silver, . . . coyne in rials of plate, and . . . Emeralds," which Hakluyt says that he obtained as booty.

Meanwhile, a prisoner who off the coast of Veragua had

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, Luxan to the crown, Nombre de Dios, June 23, 1576; Cristóbal de Erasso to the crown, La Yaguana, January 22, 1577.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 42, 43, 50, 66, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Nos. 36, 41.

<sup>5</sup> No. 3, Part II.

escaped from the English or been by them released, informed<sup>1</sup> the Spanish concerning Oxenham, his two pinnaces and the frigate or frigates (presumably prizes) which now accompanied them. It would seem that much of the merchandise which Oxenham brought from England to attract and hold the negroes had been removed from his ship to these frigates. This same person warned the Spaniards of the Englishman's intention to come to a working agreement with the *cimarrones*.

If Oxenham's own account<sup>2</sup> of these events is to be accepted, and regarding them he had no reason to lie, as he had on other points, he had sent one pinnace to bring his ship up to the harbour he calls Xerenxeren<sup>3</sup>, to which he was guided by the negroes when he established communication with them; and evidently while it was about this business the Spaniards, acting upon the information they had received from the released prisoner, came up and seized the other craft, i.e. the prizes, which had remained in that port<sup>4</sup>. They also took and destroyed a camp or "fort"<sup>5</sup> which the English had built upon the shore. This incident occurred in September, 1576<sup>6</sup>. Oxenham lost subsistence, munitions, ordnance and merchandise.

At the time he himself was inland, at Vallano, doubtless negotiating terms of alliance with the *cimarrones*, whose chief establishment was there<sup>7</sup>. Previous to setting out for these headquarters he had hidden one pinnace, and he says that upon learning of the loss of his prizes he ordered his men similarly to secrete the second pinnace and join him ashore. As for his ship, he ordered it to be burned, the iron to be saved, for iron and cordage were the only things requisite to

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 36, 41, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 52.

<sup>3</sup> It seems fairly certain that this was Acla (Pinos anchorage) or some harbour very near it. Cf. Documents Nos. 41, 43, 51, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 41, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Document No. 52, where Oxenham denies that he built any fort.

<sup>6</sup> Documents Nos. 36 and 52.

<sup>7</sup> It seems fairly certain that Oxenham went inland by Sasardi pass. Yet, so elastic is the meaning of the terms "Acla," "coast of Acla," it might have been by either of two other passes (Paso Caledonia, Paso Carreto) a little farther south. For an account of a journey which must have been similar to his, see *A Letter, giving a Description of the Isthmus of Darien*, etc., Edinburgh, 1699, pp. 15 *et seq.* (B.M. B. 670.9).

the construction of another which were not readily obtainable in the country. The winter of 1576-7 (September-March) Oxenham and his men spent among the *cimarrones* of Vallano. During this winter among the negroes, on the Pacific watershed, Oxenham built of cedar a swift light-draught pinnace, an oared<sup>1</sup> vessel "five and fortie foote by the keele," in which (his party being fifty English and perhaps ten *cimarrones*) at the commencement of Lent (February), 1577, he descended without warning upon the Pearl Islands, which lie not far off Panama in the Pacific.

It would be difficult to write a livelier description of this raid than is contained in Documents Nos. 37-40, especially in No. 40, through which ring yet the baying of the alert watch-dogs roused at the enemy's approach, the shriek of the drowsy slave-woman who opened the door to them, and John Butler's loud laughter on finding himself unexpectedly reminded of the Mosaic admonition: "Thou shalt not steal."

It is obvious that Oxenham had come to an equitable agreement with the negroes: what slaves could be taken were to be theirs, what precious metals and the like, to be his. And certainly his working methods and manners are plain, in these depositions made by persons who experienced them.

Having looted the Pearl Islands, the English seem to have approached Panama itself<sup>2</sup>, but to have been deterred from any attack they may have been audacious enough to plan by observing military movements ashore which showed that their presence was known there; as indeed it was, two men in a canoe having reached that city the day before with the startling news that English enemies were abroad upon the Pacific—that Southern Sea<sup>3</sup> which Spain considered peculiarly her own, and safe<sup>4</sup>.

In furrowing those waters with English bows, Oxenham

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 39, 41, 42, 52.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Nos. 39, 41.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 3, *post*, note 5.

<sup>4</sup> Here compare with No. 3, Part II. It seems unnecessary to point out discrepancies. Apparently Richard Hawkins made the most of Peruvian gossip which he heard while he was a prisoner in that country, both to adorn Charles Kingsley's tale (see *Westward Ho*) and to point his moral. The facts show Oxenham to have been a careless leader; he should be absolved of all unproven weaknesses.



had indeed achieved a thing for which he was warranted in anticipating such reward as went, however, to the more fortunate captain of the *Golden Hind*. Oxenham's very different recompense awaited him at Lima!

From sight of Panama he turned back, southward. On the Atlantic side of the isthmus Luxan's fleet was making ready to depart for Spain. Peruvian treasure and general business was therefore moving northward along the Pacific coast in vessels which were utterly unsuspecting that any danger threatened them, and totally unarmed. Oxenham had now the luck to encounter one such bark out of Guayaquil. The authorities at Panama had endeavoured to warn shipping, but evidently in vain, since Oxenham easily surprised this vessel, from which he took a fortune in gold, large quantities of subsistence, and some good powder. With this booty the English made off, steering for the Gulf of San Miguel and the rivers up which lay the return course to Vallano.

The Spaniards, however, were up in arms. These events but confirmed reports previously received from several quarters<sup>1</sup>. It showed them the whereabouts of the enemy they had theretofore been unable to locate<sup>2</sup>. Forthwith a small squadron, and a force of 200 men, sailed from Panama, Pedro de Ortega Valencia commanding. One unit was detached to escort safely into Perico (old Panama's port) a ship they met carrying much treasure from Peru, concerning which Oxenham was said to be informed<sup>3</sup>; the other vessels continued in pursuit of the English. Meanwhile, the *Audiencia* also sent out a party to cut off the enemy's retreat by land to the Atlantic side, where a naval reconnaissance of places where the English might emerge discovered nothing. Don Cristóbal de Erasso was advised, who with his armada was

<sup>1</sup> From the Spaniard previously mentioned, who had evidently been a prisoner with the English long enough to learn their plans; from the tortured *cimarrones* mentioned in Document No. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 41.

<sup>3</sup> "Miguel Angel's ship," a good vessel frequently mentioned in Peruvian papers of the time. It presently conveyed Oxenham to imprisonment and death at Lima. See Hawkins' *Observations*, p. 86, for mention of Miguel Angel, "a man of experience, and care..." Cf. *A. de I.* Lima 93, grant and *encomienda* to General Miguel Angel, April 9, 1588.

back in Nombre de Dios harbour. In person with a considerable escort he rode up to Panama, only to find (or so Doctor Loarte asserts<sup>1</sup>) that everything had been done which could be.

Pedro de Ortega had little difficulty in picking up Oxenham's trail—whether it was broken biscuit and pork rinds<sup>2</sup>, or chicken feathers, as Hakluyt has it, which the English strewed in their wake. While a comparison of Documents Nos. 41, 42, 52, etc. with Hakluyt's accounts of the matter shows, as has been remarked, that Vaz wrote from hearsay, not from any first-hand knowledge of facts such as these Spanish documents now make available, it is evident that some English and more *cimarrones* were surprised at meal-time at a point on the Chucunaque River<sup>3</sup> where they were leisurely unloading the pinnacle preparatory to proceeding further by land instead of by water. Whether or not there was insubordination among his men, as Vaz recounts, it would seem that had Oxenham been maintaining discipline this surprise could not have been as complete as it was.

Those who survived the Spaniards' opening volley fled and informed Oxenham. He was at a neighbouring village, called Catalina<sup>4</sup>. He may indeed have been negotiating for its transportation by the negroes, as Vaz says, but meanwhile the booty was buried. After some hesitation, but evidently in hopes of recovering it, Ortega advanced upon this village and drove the English out. They were now short of firearms and especially of powder; moreover, their strength was weakened by the loss of twelve killed.

One of the English lads who knew where it was cached had surrendered to Ortega, who soon located the booty. With it and his three or four English prisoners (three boys and one wounded man) he now returned to Panama, where he arrived by April 18 with news of his victory, his captives, and not only all the gold and silver which the English had taken from the Guayaquil bark but also most of that which they had obtained earlier from other craft on the Atlantic side.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 42, p. 328, *post*.

<sup>3</sup> p. 179, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly at or above the site of the present town of Yavisa?

While admitting that some of the enemy had escaped from him, including Oxenham, Butler, and others rated as leaders of the expedition, Ortega Valencia considered that he had achieved enough to warrant him not only in returning forthwith to Panama, but in immediately departing for Spain in demand of a corresponding reward for the services he had so rendered<sup>1</sup>. Surely he would indeed have been unwise to linger in the bush with a dangerous enemy there, and treasure in his possession which he might have had some difficulty in protecting from his own men<sup>2</sup>.

Further, Ortega not only captured the launch, or "pinnesse," which had carried the English to the Pearl Islands, but from the English lads whom he took prisoners he learned of the two other pinnaces which Oxenham had left semi-submerged and covered with boughs on the Atlantic side, and of more loot (in silver) buried there. The *Audiencia* immediately despatched a party under Captain Melo; and despite some little friction with Captain-General Erasso these vessels were found and raised<sup>3</sup>. So also sails, oars and artillery were discovered and seized.

Oxenham's situation was now far from happy: he was without means of transportation home, without arms and munitions (nearly all had been captured), dependent upon the blacks for food, and, what was worst of all, he was discredited among them. Neither, for that matter, was the situation of the authorities at Panama particularly happy.

Oxenham's irruption into the Pacific was bold; and he planned and promised worse to come. Especially must it be borne in mind that at this same time Barker was harrying the other seaboard; rumours were rife concerning enemy fleets approaching with determination to establish permanent settlements<sup>4</sup>; and the president of the *Audiencia* had no means of knowing how much truth there was in these reports, or the real strength of the enemies besetting him by sea and land, or what measure of understanding existed among them.

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 42, 43 and especially 46.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Nos. 42, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 45, 46, 50.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Nos. 38, 39, 41, 52, etc.

Discreditable to all concerned as Barker's adventure was presently shown<sup>1</sup> to be, at the moment it must have looked alarming enough to the Spaniards menaced.

As has been stated, the Tierra Firme fleet anchored in Nombre de Dios harbour at the end of May, 1576, Francisco de Luxan commanding. Certain vessels sailed presently for Spain, but Luxan with others remained at Nombre de Dios for the winter. Meanwhile, Don Cristóbal de Erasso, commanding the armada, went on a cruise against enemies, who were especially numerous around the island of Hayti.

When he went he left behind two frigates and a galleon of his armada in command of his son, Vice-Admiral don Miguel de Erasso, to protect the Main<sup>2</sup>. One of these frigates Barker captured<sup>3</sup>—ship, crew, ordnance “and a booke on Navigation.” Hakluyt states that the prisoners taken with it were set ashore; these Spanish documents declare<sup>4</sup> that they were thrown overboard, to drown. This was unusual cruelty<sup>5</sup>. The frigate became the English expedition's flagship. The *Ragged Staff* was sunk “because of her great leakage.”

Apparently Barker made an unsuccessful attempt upon Veragua (in May? 1577)<sup>6</sup>. That he hung a settler upon the beach and left another there in chains suggests that he considered he had been treacherously dealt by.

Next, these English captured Licentiate Juan Rodriguez de Mora<sup>7</sup>, an officer of considerable standing, his notary, sheriff, and official papers. The judge and sheriff were set ashore at Tolu, its citizens having evidently provided the ransom demanded for the licentiate. The notary (Hakluyt's “scrivano”) was carried to Veragua where, apparently after some demur<sup>8</sup>, he too was ransomed. Don Miguel de Erasso and

<sup>1</sup> Compare throughout with Part II, No. 3.      <sup>2</sup> Document No. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 46, 50.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Nos. 45, 46, 50.

<sup>5</sup> Observe Dr Loarte's comment in Document No. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Documents Nos. 45, 46, 55, 62, 65.

<sup>7</sup> p. 336, *post*, Document No. 47, etc. “... Licentiate Juan Rodriguez de Mora... They kept him prisoner for a day and on the following set him ashore in the town of Tolu in exchange for certain pieces of wrought silver, and some of gold.”—Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the crown, Cartagena, October 19, 1577, in *A. de I.* 72-4-6, Santa Fé. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 49.

his patrol came up just in time to take possession of the judge's papers, and to see the English depart unscathed.

Yet things were going badly with the expedition, because Barker, Coxe and Roche were quarrelling among themselves. By August of 1577 they had arrived at La Guanaja<sup>1</sup>, where apparently they sought subsistence and a harbour convenient for overhauling. The natives of the island informed the Spaniards at Trujillo of their presence. Captain Diego Lopez sallied forth with a party, surprised the English ashore and there killed Barker and a dozen of his men. Their heads and a hand were carried to Trujillo as trophies.

Coxe and the other survivors made off<sup>2</sup> to an adjacent island where they broke open their dead captain's chest and shared its contents. They looted the island of Ruatan and there captured a pinnace with which, a skiff, and Erasso's frigate they steered for home. But off the west end of Cuba the frigate capsized, carrying to the bottom<sup>3</sup> fourteen or fifteen men, much if not all of the booty, and presumably much of the subsistence needed for a home voyage.

Hakluyt's story of this enterprise was "collected out of certaine notes and examinations," i.e. from the records of the suit-at-law later prosecuted against the survivors. It is comprehensible that none concerned in it talked willingly of the voyage, its quarrels, mutiny, and Barker's end. Therefore, indubitably, Hakluyt himself would have been the first to welcome the version<sup>4</sup> contained in Document No. 65, which

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 59, 65.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 60.

<sup>3</sup> *Principal Navigations*, x, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> "At the time having news that an English corsair was proceeding toward Golfo Dulce, which is outside this jurisdiction, I so advised President Villalobos, then head of the royal *Audiencia*, that he might act in the matter. Further, I ordered Diego Martin de Angulo, my lieutenant at Puerto de Caballos, immediately with one of two ships (out of Spain) which were anchored in that harbour to go himself or send against this corsair, to capture or kill him.

"Deeming this affair of small importance, President Villalobos sent Don Juan de Céspedes, *alcalde mayor* of Vera Paz, to the Gulf, but with insufficient arms and forces to oppose the enemy. Having entered by the river into the Gulf, with Indians he took to guide him, the corsair landed by night, firing harquebuses, so that Don Juan was compelled to retire because he had not the means to defend himself. The corsair raided the Gulf and withdrew to his frigates.

shows that, after the loss of the frigate off Cuba, Coxe and the survivors did not continue on their course, as Hakluyt supposes, but with the pinnace and the skiff which remained to them turned back to Central America to recoup their loss, and probably in some convenient harbour on the coast of Honduras (perhaps at Bocas del Drago<sup>1</sup>) they lay low until the spring of 1578. Possibly it was at this time that they built the new frigate which was eventually left at Scilly<sup>2</sup>.

When spring came and business picked up along the Main, Coxe and his comrades fared forth again and were evidently doing well for themselves up to the point when they were "had in chase by men of warre," which had come out after them from Puerto de Caballos, "whereby they were enforced every man to shift for himselfe," and the skiff and seven prisoners were taken. "... What became of them afterwards God knoweth," Hakluyt exclaims; and, after three centuries and a half, Alonso de Contreras Guevara replies<sup>3</sup>: "They died like Christians," on the gallows at Puerto de Caballos, except one lad who was spared.

According to the Spanish ambassador in London<sup>4</sup>, Coxe and perhaps eighteen men got back to England (June, 1578). They "shortly after came to miserable ends," because,

"As he came out of the river to the sea he encountered a ship which, under a captain with forty men, my lieutenant aforesaid had armed and cleared to hunt him. They killed seven of the enemy, but with all that, because his was an oared vessel, the corsair slipped away among certain shoals, so that they could not follow him, for ours was a large ship. Further, in another part of the coast they found a skiff belonging to the same company, with seven Englishmen, whom they captured. Carried to Puerto de Caballos, six were executed; appeal was granted to the seventh, a boy."—Alonso de Contreras Guevara to the crown, Santiago de Guatemala, March 30, 1580, in *A. de I.* 63-6-39, Guatemala 39 (75).

<sup>1</sup> Documents No. 45, 46, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Its armament included four of Oxenham's "cast Peeces." The Spaniards had seized his artillery in September, 1576, or in the spring of 1577. Undoubtedly the English re-took them with Erasso's frigate; they must therefore have transferred these pieces to the pinnace which was seized "at the isle of Sant Francisco" (Malatierra or Ruatan?). Apparently those guns were all of Oxenham's expedition which ever returned to England.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 65.

<sup>4</sup> *Spanish Calendar*, II, p. 593, Bernardino de Mendoza to the crown, London, June 11, 1578; p. 594, *id.* to *id.* June 13, 1578.

according to Hakluyt, they had been unfaithful and disobedient in "honest causes" to their captain, whose brother prosecuted them as accessories to Barker's death, and responsible for the unprofitable outcome of the enterprise.

Neither does it appear from the documents here presented that these English ever took Trujillo, or even seriously menaced it, as Hakluyt supposes that they did. "...Wine and oyle as much as they would" the English doubtless did obtain—but not at "Truxillio."

Now, in the first moment of the panic into which Oxenham's irruption threw all the coast, from Panama to Lima, Doctor Loarte had appealed to the viceroy of Peru for help. The viceroy responded and so, apparently, did the flower of that realm<sup>1</sup>.

On May 6 (1577) an expedition sailed from Callao consisting of two vessels, about 150 effectives and some sixty servants, under the command of Diego de Frias Trejo, whom the viceroy had commissioned to be his deputy captain-general for this campaign. Frias had orders to pick up two brigantines at Puerto Viejo and proceed to Panama. He was to overtake and escort safely into its harbour three vessels aboard which the viceroy had shipped treasure before he heard of the English incursion; and he had orders to make war upon the intruders and, further, to chastise the *cimarrones* who had aided them. En route Frias met a messenger carrying a letter from Doctor Loarte which suggested that the Peruvian expedition might well turn back, since Ortega Valencia had already dispersed the English; but Frias preferred, or was persuaded, to stress that part of his orders which bade him punish the negroes—a thing it could not be alleged that Ortega had already done. He was strengthened in this attitude by information that some if not most of the English were still at large in the bush around Vallano; and doubtless also by the knowledge that public opinion at Panama was urging<sup>2</sup> an immediate continuance of the campaign, despite Doctor Loarte's disinclination to spend more

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 48 and 71.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Nos. 45, 46.

money and his arguments that it would be better to postpone further activities until spring. Moreover, in the letter itself which Doctor Loarte had written, Frias could find a loophole through which to proceed, for it was a more or less informal communication and did not venture to countermand any explicit orders which the viceroy might have issued. Therefore, dismissing only his two brigantines, Frias came on to Panama and presented himself before the *Audiencia* on June 20, 1577. At this juncture that party returned which under Captain Melo had been sent out to take the English pinnaces hidden at Acla and recover the silver buried in that vicinity. This party had crossed the isthmus from Acla to San Miguel and brought news<sup>1</sup>.

Captain Melo and his men had had a few brushes with the English, apparently as they were coming down to their hidden pinnaces to embark for home; these the English found gone, but they did succeed in removing the treasure they had buried, and so returned to the negroes again<sup>2</sup>. Obeying his instructions, Captain Melo fell upon the headquarters of the *cimarrones* who had assisted the invaders, burned the considerable town of Ronconcholon<sup>3</sup>, which he found abandoned, and destroyed crops. Further, he discovered and destroyed eight great canoes in which Oxenham presently admitted that the English had meant to resume operations on the Pacific, there to take some vessel, and with its iron, cordage and sails repair to the Atlantic seaboard, and build a new craft in which to get home. It was therefore evident that a further campaign was indeed necessary<sup>4</sup>.

Nevertheless almost two months passed in wrangling at Panama, for Doctor Loarte resented Frias' commission, considering that in issuing it the viceroy of Peru had intruded upon his jurisdiction. Therefore he delayed and hampered

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 45, 46, 50, 51, 55, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Nos. 50, 51.

<sup>3</sup> p. 179, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> The following account of the second campaign (Frias') against the English under Oxenham is based upon Documents 48, 50-56, 58, 61-70, inclusive, which it has not been considered necessary to cite specifically.



Frias and not until August 8 did the expedition (consisting now of seven vessels, about 200 effectives, negro carriers, etc.) sail from Perico for the Gulf of San Miguel. It had been agreed that the president was to send out other parties, to Acla and to Puerto Bello, to cut off the enemy's retreat. Frias and his troops were to occupy Catalina and Ronconcholon.

Establishing his base (or *real*) at San Miguel<sup>1</sup>, Frias left a guard over his supplies there, and sent a detachment under Pedro de Arana, his second in command, up the Indios River to occupy Catalina (the place where Ortega Valencia had met and fought the English the preceding spring). He himself with another column silently advanced upon Ronconcholon, the negro headquarters, the black capital, as it were, of Vallano. He arrived there only to find the town still abandoned; he could catch not a glimpse of either English or *cimarrones*. Yet they had been in that immediate neighbourhood and fled only upon news of his approach.

The English were now divided in opinion as to what course to pursue. Oxenham and twenty-one of his men were for descending again upon the Pearl Islands, to seize some craft thereabouts and by this means obtain iron, cordage and sails. A smaller group of a dozen, whose leader in these documents is called Canoa<sup>2</sup>, believed it wiser to turn northward at once, construct rafts, and on the coast of Tolu seize some vessel in which to get home. Canoa and his party had already left for the Atlantic side and Oxenham and his were about to join Juan Vaquero, the captain or king of the *cimarrones*, to carry out their project, when General Frias and his forces came up, from whom they fled.

In fleeing eight of them, among whom was Oxenham himself, encountered Arana and his column, and fell prisoners. In Document No. 70 we have Oxenham's own story of his capture.

<sup>1</sup> Real Viejo? See p. 179, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In the Spanish original this man is called Mister or *Mosen*, which would suggest that he was a man of birth, *Jacobo Canoba*, or Peter, or (most frequently) *Jacome Canoa*. The *Canoba* and *Jacome* (like Butler's accent in speaking Spanish) suggest association with the Portuguese. *Canoa* is possibly a phonetic version of some English surname.

Being by Oxenham's deposition informed concerning Canoa and the party which had gone northward, General Frias with half his troops set out to find them, leaving Arana behind with the other half. He now captured the ship's master, who assured him that his compatriots had indeed struck out for the Atlantic seaboard, and therefore Frias continued to Acla. He picked up Canoa's trail and came upon a camp where there were indications that the English had built a raft and embarked, but he caught no sight of them. He did, however, recover 900 or 1000 *pesos* in silver, the treasure which the English had successfully removed from its first cache (near Acla, where the pinnaces had been hidden) to a second hiding place, to which it may be inferred that the ship's master led the way. By the middle of October the authorities at Panama were informed that nine English had been taken and this treasure recovered.

In December John Butler and five others with him, who seem to have been making for the northern coast, were sighted and presently surprised in their camp by night. Butler and four of his companions were taken. One escaped and was not seen again; it was said that the negroes killed him.

Butler seems to have endeavoured to save his life by playing into the Spaniards' hands. He now (January(?) 1578) led the whole Spanish force back to Acla, after Canoa and his party, who were all the English unaccounted for; but they could not be found. Frias was convinced that they were at certain islands (Isle of Pines and its vicinity), and so informed the *Audiencia* that it might send a party out to capture them.

By mid-January Frias had eighteen English prisoners and about forty blacks. He considered that he had well punished the negroes for having assisted the intruders. His forces were ragged and exhausted and all desired to terminate the campaign. The expedition assembled at San Miguel headquarters to await orders from the viceroy and means of transportation to Panama. Frias employed this time in a raid on Old Vallano<sup>1</sup>.

Vessels to convey the troops were sent and on April 10 the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 67.

Peruvian expedition made what must have been a triumphal entry into Panama. Doctor Loarte had died<sup>1</sup> meantime and there was none to deny a welcome to victors, who as trophies exhibited John Oxenham, John Butler, their ship's master, and fifteen more English, to say nothing of forty head of negroes who had a real marketable value.

Despatches were received from the viceroy, who ordered the leaders of the English expedition to be brought to him. Accordingly when Diego de Frias and his victorious army went back to Peru they carried with them Oxenham, Butler, Butler's younger brother Henry, and the ship's master. Their long imprisonment at Lima ended on a gallows there in November, 1580<sup>2</sup>. The other prisoners were executed forthwith at Panama. The English had admitted that they had no commission from their queen, so there was no reason to hesitate to deal with them summarily.

Fruitless search continued for Canoa's party. Some inferred that these English were lost on the sea to which they had been compelled to entrust themselves on too fragile rafts. Others declared that the negroes provided them with a canoe and that, having eventually "bettered themselves to a frigate," they had presumably gone to England, thence to return in force.

Certainly the *cimarrones* expected the English to come back to Vallano. It is interesting to note (Documents Nos. 72, 73) that, unlike fickle savages, the *cimarrones* seem to have remained faithful to their friends even in adversity, and the blacks of Vallano toyed with the Spanish overtures for peace while on the northern coast they long maintained a vain watch for the black flag which was to signal Canoa's return<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile, the colonial authorities were demanding that the crown should settle the isthmus for its protection against

<sup>1</sup> On February 18, 1578. Cf. *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, his widow, Doña Ynes de Céspedes y Cardenas, to the crown, Panama, February 23, 1578.

<sup>2</sup> Nuttall, Zelia, *New Light on Drake*, Hakluyt Society, ser. ii, no. 34, p. 162, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Enclosure with Document No. 73. We have here the true origin of the black flag which came to mean piracy.

invaders; and that galleys be provided for its defence by sea. The settlement was not attempted, but the galleys were sent<sup>1</sup>. Swift and active, they made the Main dangerous for intruders. Therefore such enemies preferred for the next few years to prey on shipping along the undefended coasts of the Antilles.

After Oxenham's disaster there came a pause in English adventurings into the Caribbean. Drake had sought a larger stage and in the *Golden Hind* was circling the world. Not to be moved out of his inherited policies by any such spectacular feats, "the old captain," "old Mr William Hawkins of Plymouth," was shortly to clear on a commercial reconnaissance of Spain's Indies; and England's first attempt at colonization in America was a pregnant event of the near future.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 331, *post*.

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PART I  
SPANISH DOCUMENTS

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## Document No. 1<sup>1</sup>

[The Royal Officials<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

(p. 3) . . . <sup>3</sup> As we were writing this, news arrived that a French ship and three shallops have plundered two barks which were coming down from Las Cruces<sup>4</sup>, the port by which traffic comes from Panama to this city by way of the Chagre River and the Northern Sea<sup>5</sup>. It is eighteen leagues from here.

This occurred at the mouth of the river, and from these barks the corsairs took 20,000 *pesos*<sup>6</sup> in silver and gold, belonging to passengers on board who were coming from that city. Three of them were taken prisoners, two killed, and others wounded.

It is said that these corsairs remain there, at anchor, to take what prizes they can, and this event has much disturbed the

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2107), Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Treasurer, accountant and factor.

<sup>3</sup> To save space, it has been necessary here, and elsewhere throughout this volume, to eliminate those portions of the documents presented which do not concern the subject-matter of the book. Superscriptions and summaries, annotations and decrees which appear on the back of documents, have invariably been omitted when to present them would contribute nothing of substance to this work.

<sup>4</sup> I.e. Venta Cruces, sometimes also called Venta de Chagres. There is at present a Venta Chagres which is a place distinct and at a distance from Venta Cruces, but in these documents only one, Venta Cruces, is meant.

<sup>5</sup> To the Spaniards of this place and time the Pacific Ocean was the *Mar del Sur*, i.e. Southern Sea; and all the waters washing the northern and eastern shores of South and Central America were the *Mar del Norte*, i.e. Northern Sea. These latter are frequently called the Atlantic (with complete disregard for the existence of the Caribbean). To the 16th century Spaniard what we call the Atlantic was better known as the *Mar oceano* (Ocean Sea).

<sup>6</sup> " . . . eight shillings three pence the Pezo . . .," p. 312, *post*.

minds of merchants and residents<sup>1</sup> of this realm, for that is the route by which all merchandise from this kingdom<sup>2</sup> to Peru must necessarily pass, and if they remain in that position it will work much damage and injury to the trade and commerce of these parts, and upon us of your majesty's subjects and vassals who reside in them.

General (p. 6) Diego Flores, who was at the time in this port with the fleet which by your majesty's command he brought hither, being on the eve of sailing for Spain, has gone out after the corsairs with a warship and three shallops. It is expected that he will meet with success, since they say that he must of necessity come upon them, their position being as it is. . . .

Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's loyal and humble servants kiss your majesty's royal feet.

*Baltasar de Sotomayor.*

*Juan de Peñalosa.*

*Cristóbal de Salinas.* (Rubrics) . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Vecinos*, in the original. For this word no satisfactory English translation seems possible, and in this work it is variously rendered resident, inhabitant, citizen, burgher, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "The kingdom of Tierra Firme called Castilla del Oro." Cf. Document No. 9.



## Document No. 2<sup>1</sup>

[...to..., ...<sup>2</sup>, after June, 1569 (?).]

(p. 1)

Account of what two seamen relate, one a native of Huelva, named Antonio Blas, and the other a native of Biscay, called Joaneto de Angurria.

Clearing on a certain day in June in a shallop from Nombre de Dios for the Chagre River, with eleven other comrades, being thirteen in all, they were met by a launch coming from the direction of the Bastimentos Islands, which are near there. It gave them chase in such manner that it compelled them to run ashore. The launch still pursued them and on land killed a seaman belonging to the shallop. These two men were taken prisoners and the rest escaped into the bush.

These two the launch carried to the Bastimentos Islands, where were three vessels of 400 to 500 tons burden, and two shallops of sixty or seventy tons, all well armed. They were kept aboard the flagship nine days, and were questioned as to the whereabouts of Pedro Menéndez' armada<sup>3</sup>, and asked many other details (which they have forgotten) concerning the land.

At the end of this period they were required, being acquainted with the coast, to guide a launch to certain ports and rivers there, on that mainland coast, which the corsairs desired to enter with I do not know what shallops. Proceeding on this errand these two seamen escaped one night.

They report that all the people on board the said ships were Flemish, with some English. They say the general is (p. 2) called Musier de Ambile or de Vile. The chief pilot was a cer-

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22 (1), *Patronato* 267, 1 *pliego*, copy.

<sup>2</sup> The location, appearance and content of this document suggest that it is an excerpt from a letter written by some official in the Indies to another there, or in Spain, which the recipient considered of enough importance to transmit for the consideration of some superior.

<sup>3</sup> Menéndez and his galleons were in Havana harbour in mid-June, 1569.

tain Hernandez, Portuguese, who sailed with the *adelantado*<sup>1</sup> for a long time in the galleons, though some who know this man say that he is really a Fleming by birth, who was long in Portugal, and so became Portuguese.

The Biscay seaman, who understands Flemish very well, because he has sailed many times to Flanders, says that on inquiring he learned certainly that those three vessels and two shallops, with two more vessels and a shallop of the same company which had remained off the coast of La Española<sup>2</sup>, sailed from Flushing, and that their people say they are subjects of the Prince of Orange<sup>3</sup>, and that they came to the Indies by his order and command, and that every year a fleet will come from Flanders, as one comes from Spain, to support the war at his majesty's expense. These two relate strange villanies and insolences on the part of these corsairs.

They said that they would return by way of La Margarita, to rejoin the others. This would be very detrimental, because a pearl fishery has been discovered there which is said to be very rich, and they cannot fail to do damage, because of the little defence available.

There is news, too, of many other corsairs hereabouts. I heard from the governor at Havana some (p. 3) three days ago of four more ships. I do not know which these are.

<sup>1</sup> Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, *comendador* of Santa Cruz de la Zarza, governor and captain-general of the provinces of Florida and island of Cuba, and of his majesty's armada against corsairs and Lutherans in the Western Ocean and on the Indies trade routes, *adelantado* of Florida.

<sup>2</sup> The island of Hayti, or Santo Domingo; English corruption, Hispaniola.

<sup>3</sup> After mishap, Orange was reorganizing for further effort by land and sea, and the policy here so early stated was effectively carried out about fifty years later. The year 1569 was the first in which the Sea Beggars effectively harassed Spanish shipping in European waters, following the example already set by the Huguenots of La Rochelle.

## Document No. 3<sup>1</sup>

[Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...The fleet which General Diego Flores de Valdés commands reached this port of Nombre de Dios on the first of this present month of June, in which fleet came the viceroy<sup>2</sup>, Don Francisco de Toledo...

So also arrived news that numerous corsairs are scattered from Santa Marta, the mouth of the Rio Grande, and the Baru Islands to this place. They must have come in the wake of the fleet, for they took one of its ships which was left unloading at Cabo de la Vela, and in addition another is missing which it is said belonged to the *Adelantado* Menéndez. In it there was a heavy cargo of merchandise, and religious and other passengers, to a number which makes its loss a great pity.

And pity may also be felt for this town of Nombre de Dios, and for all the fleet, for they are defenceless...

...shortly before this fleet arrived... five French corsairs... in one of the frigates they had taken... were wrecked in a storm on the reef outside this harbour, and were made prisoners here. Having been taken to Panama... they said they were natives of Normandy, and had sailed from the port of Havre; and that their captain was called (p. 2) Jean Harnao; and that another, who succeeded to the command on his death, from Dominica on, was called Benevila<sup>3</sup>.

They said that another large vessel they met at Baru and the San Bernardo Islands, which carried more than a hundred men, had sailed from Rouen, its captain being Nipontville;

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2108), Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Of Peru.

<sup>3</sup> Bienville?

and that the men of this large vessel took and sacked the town of Tolu, in the province of Cartagena, and on the coast of Spain captured a ship laden with sugar (which vessel they took along with them), and five or six frigates of the coastwise trade of Tierra Firme; and that together they had sailed close by this port of Nombre de Dios, to see if they could take it, and continued to the Chagre River.

There they seized barks engaged in the river traffic, and two frigates. A crew made up from both ships was put on board one frigate to cross the bar of the Veragua River and go up to the town of Concepción. This they were prevented from doing by the heavy undertow at the river's mouth, and in the meantime these five were left in one of the frigates which was wrecked (having lost sight of the other vessels) on the reef outside this harbour of Nombre de Dios. There was a Portuguese with them, and so far nothing has been...<sup>1</sup>...them.

Later it was reported that these same ships had presently returned to sack and burn the same town of Tolu.

Wherefore these cursed corsairs are so...<sup>1</sup>...along this coast, especially since the last fleet, when they took Captain Zarate and one Espinar, and so unprotected [is] this port... this town is in extreme danger of being taken and burned by them....

...Nombre de Dios, June 30, 1569.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least and humblest servant and vassal kisses your majesty's feet.

*Cristóbal de Salinas* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> Torn.

## Document No. 4<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Carasa<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, Panama, March 27, 1570.]

(p. 1)

+

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

(p. 4) . . . The matter which, in this kingdom, most urgently demands remedial action is the problem of dispersing the *cimarrones*, black outlaws in rebellion in its mountainous, unpopulated interior. They are numerous and (such is their daring and audacity) they come forth upon the roads leading from this city to that of Nombre de Dios, kill travellers, and steal what these have with them, if it be clothing and wine. So far they have not taken money<sup>3</sup>.

They threaten to burn these two towns, and have approached within an eighth of a league and frequently carried off negresses at work washing clothes in the rivers from which the towns get their supply of water. Similarly, (p. 5) they carry off negroes sent out for fire-wood, and induce others to leave their owners, as they do every day. Wherefore no master dare punish his slave or even bid him do more than the slave may wish to do.

To remedy this great evil, when Don Francisco de Toledo, Viceroy of Peru, was in this city, he consulted with this *Audiencia* and the city in the matter, and it was ordered that a captain be named to go with 200 men against the principal settlement of these blacks, which is Vallano, thirty leagues from the city of Nombre de Dios, to uproot them and settle Spaniards there. This was put into execution, and one Esteban de Trexo was named captain of the said enterprise. He has set out upon it with 140 soldiers, a hundred of them harquebusiers. It is believed he will achieve immediate results, although he has not the means to sustain this undertaking, nor

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (21), Panama 13, 2 *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> A judge of the *Audiencia* (high court) seated in Panama City.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Document No. 9.

is the support which this city and that of Nombre de Dios<sup>1</sup> give him (8000 *pesos*) sufficient, for Pedro de Osua<sup>2</sup> spent 27,000 and could not extirpate them, though his expedition accomplished much.

When the selection of the person to lead this expedition was under consideration, I opposed the choice of the said Trexo, giving reasons therefor, which were that he is young, has not had much experience, and possesses scanty capacity and little authority. To all which the answer was that none other would undertake it for so little money, and so the affair was decided.

My opinion, based on fifteen years' residence in these parts and my experience with these negroes, is that unless your majesty favour the business with some tax laid on merchandise entering Nombre de Dios, the money which can be raised here will not suffice. If the remedy be delayed I believe the damage will be irreparable, because the multitude of the blacks is increasing, and from everywhere many are joining them, and every day they become bolder.

To such a pitch has their arrogance attained that, informed by their spies in this city when the said captain was due to leave it with his force, in the road by which he was to go, eight leagues from this city, they erected a gallows and on it hung some knives, saying that on that gallows they were going to hang the captain and cut off the heads (p. 6) of all who accompanied him.

Your majesty will deign to provide in this matter as may be for the best good of your majesty's service and vassals. . . .

(p. 7) . . . Panama, March 27, 1570.

*The Licentiate Carasa (Rubric). . . .*

<sup>1</sup> In *A. de I.* 69-3-8 is preserved an original communication, Captain de Trejo to the crown, from Nombre de Dios, February 25, 1570, in which he complains that that city has not lived up to the agreement between them, which was drawn in anticipation of a two years' campaign.

<sup>2</sup> Conducting a previous campaign.

## Document No. 5<sup>1</sup>

[English Corsairs to certain Spaniards, the Mainland coast,  
February (?), 1571.]

(p. 1)

†

Captain and crew of this frigate:

We are surprised that you ran from us in that fashion and later refused to come to talk with us under our flag of truce, knowing us, and having seen evidence a few days past that we do ill to none under our flag of truce, but only wished to speak with you.

And since you will not come courteously to talk with us, without evil or damage, you will find your frigate spoiled by your own fault. And to any who courteously may come to talk with us, we will do no harm, under our flag. And who does not come, his be the blame.

And do not think we were afraid of those ships<sup>2</sup>, nor of others. By the help of God it shall cost them their lives before they prevail over us.

Now you have proof that it would have been better had you come to talk with us, for in the frigate you had not the value of four silver *reales*.

Done by English who are well disposed, if there be no cause to the contrary; if there be cause, we will be devils rather than men.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20 (61), *Patronato* 265, 1 *pliego*, translation. On its p. 4 this document is labelled: "Letter of certain English corsairs, I mean, copy of the original which they sent to this city of Nombre de Dios by two (?) men they had taken prisoners off this Mainland coast; and it is sent by me, the factor, Cristóbal de Salinas, to his majesty and his royal Council for the Indies." Its calligraphy suggests that this translation was made by a Fleming or Dutchman, perhaps by "Maese Fernando," who knew French, and probably English also. Cf. *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22 (60), *Patronato* 267. Except in general sense the present version doubtless bears little resemblance to the original communication. Cf. Document No. 7, in which this was once an enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. Diego Flores de Valdés. Cf. Documents Nos. 7, 8.

## Document No. 6<sup>1</sup>

[Doña Juana de Estrada and Luis de Soto, depositions,  
Nombre de Dios, March 1, 1571.]

(p. 1)

†

In the city of Nombre de Dios in the kingdom of Tierra Firme, on the first day of the month of March in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy one, the illustrious Señor Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda, *fiscal* of the royal *Audiencia* of...Panama...made examination and took evidence as follows:

On oath...Doña Joana de Estrada, widow, who was the wife of Diego de Azevedo, deceased, burgher of the city of Santo Domingo in La Española...

...deposed...that some twenty<sup>2</sup> days ago witness and Diego de Azevedo her husband, the Licentiate Luys de Soto, Canon Francisco de Talavera, and other persons, sailed from the harbour of the city of Santo Domingo in a vessel belonging to Luzon<sup>3</sup> and arrived at the port of the city of Cartagena, and there transhipped to a frigate belonging to Diego Polo, burgher of Cartagena, to proceed (p. 2) to the port of the city of Nombre de Dios.

Arrived at the Pontoon, which is between the mouth of the Chagre River and this city, the said frigate anchored. While it lay at anchor a pinnace manned by French or English corsairs came up. As they drew alongside the frigate the corsairs blew a trumpet, and the crew of the frigate recognised that they were French.

The corsairs sought to board the frigate, and Diego de Azevedo, deponent's husband, and the rest who were in the frigate, resisted them; and in the said defence the corsairs, shooting arrows, shot Diego de Azevedo, deponent's husband, with an arrow through the brows, of which wound he died in

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22 (60), *Patronato* 267, 2 *pliegos*, certified copy.

<sup>2</sup> De Soto says about forty days after they left Santo Domingo.

<sup>3</sup> Rodrigo Luzon, burgher of Santo Domingo city.



an hour. In the same manner they wounded a seaman with another arrow, of which wound he died within two days. The Licentiate Soto was wounded by an arrow, which passed clean through his arm. So also three other Spaniards died. And another seaman and a woman, deponent's servant, and three of her slaves were wounded; in addition to which they killed another slave of hers with a bullet.

Seeing this, the frigate's crew cut the cable and drove ashore, where the people escaped into mangroves which grew there.

The French or English boarded the frigate and looted and pillaged what her passengers and crew had on board her. In the frigate, after they had gone, was found a letter written, which said that if they caught the people of the frigate they would hang them all. Asked if this letter was written in the Spanish language, deponent stated that it was said at the time that it was written in a foreign language.

And she heard it said, after these events had occurred, that with the English or (p. 3) French were two men, one of whom had daubed his face with red and the other with charcoal. These persons were seen during the fighting, and this is what she knows of the matter....

Dofia Joana de Estrada Cabeça de Vaca....

On the said day, month and year the Licentiate Luys de Soto was sworn...and deposed that...the master of the said frigate having passed by to the port of the Pontoons, which is fourteen leagues west of the port of the city of Nombre de Dios (because he had been unable to make this latter harbour), while he was at anchor there, on Wednesday, in the afternoon, which was the twenty-first day of February of the present year one thousand five hundred and seventy one, a pinnace came up, manned by English and French, numbering fourteen or fifteen men. She carried two small culverins at the bow, and those on board were armed with harquebuses and arrows. When they had arrived alongside the frigate they sounded a trumpet and laid hands upon their swords, and slipped on their targets, and boarded the frigate, where were deponent and the rest of the people (p. 4) who were on board her; they

were off their guard, not realizing that this vessel was a corsair.

When the enemy sought to board, the people of the frigate, with two swords amongst them, held them off. Since they were finding it impossible to board, from the poop of the pinnace bowmen began to discharge arrows, and with an arrow which struck him in the temple killed one Diego Azevedo, burgher and municipal councillor of the city of Santo Domingo. With another arrow-shot they killed a seaman, for they struck him through the heart; and in like fashion with a ball from a small culverin they killed a negro, and shot an arrow through deponent's arm, and with the said arrows wounded five or six other persons on board the said frigate.

Observing in what danger they were, and that they had no arms but their swords and stones, with which they had defended themselves for three hours, and that their assailants would kill them all with the small culverins and harquebuses and arrows with which they were armed, deponent and the rest slipped the cable that the frigate might drift to shore, as she did. Seeing this, and that with the pinnace they had been unable to take them in all this time, the English went off to capture another frigate, which was near the one in which deponent was, the people from on board it having fled to land. And while they were taking that frigate, deponent's frigate grounded, and so all who were in it went to land, through water to the waist and sometimes to the breast, until they came to an islet, where all were saved.

And after this the English or French boarded the frigate and plundered it, breaking open boxes; and they carried (p. 5) off everything of value aboard her; and from there on Thursday afternoon the corsairs sailed off in their pinnace towards the mouth of the Chagre River. They left the frigate's boat with its bottom knocked out and had cut up part of her cordage.

It was said there that these corsairs had a large ship, manned with men well armed, anchored in the mouth of the Chagre River, which deponent knows for a fact, because five

negroes came to the harbour where he was, who were from a Chagre River bark<sup>1</sup>, and they stated that the corsairs had taken them, together with the merchandise in drapery which the said bark carried.

Among the corsairs of this pinnace deponent saw one who seemed to have blackened his face with powder, and it was also commonly said among the frigate's men that there was another disguised, that he might not be recognized, although deponent does not recall seeing him. . . .

Licentiate Luys de Soto. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Melo's.

## Document No. 7<sup>1</sup>

[Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...Under the command of Diego Flores de Valdés, the fleet of twenty-two vessels entered the harbour of this city of Nombre de Dios...on January 21, and this place and Peru were so far from supposing that it could arrive at such a time that neither cash nor merchants from there have even yet appeared for business, and everything is in suspense...

Your majesty was advised last fleet concerning the Lutheran corsairs, French and English, who arrogantly and shamelessly frequented this coast and committed many robberies and did heavy damage in the Chagre (p. 2) River, in the town of Tolu, and to a vessel belonging to the *Adelantado* Menéndez, and to other craft.

And this year, for a month now, with the same avidity and greed, they have returned to the same locality and the Chagre River, seizing frigates and small vessels coming from the islands, and barks with cargo for the Chagre River, I mean for the House at Cruces. With a galliot rowing sixteen oars, carrying thirty-six harquebusiers, their guide being a negro, Pedro Mandinga (whom they captured when the last fleet was here), they arrived within five leagues of the House itself at Cruces, when the negro deserted and warned Panama, reporting to the *Audiencia* seated in that city.

That court sent word here, and after mature consideration, with the advice of established residents in this country, the captain-general of the fleet and armada, Diego Flores de Valdés, went out after them; and they fled from him.

It now appears that they have returned, and also shallops of other English ships which it was understood remained at

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2, Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original.

Cativa Headland. They make threats in an audacious letter which the said English of one of these shallops or launches wrote, a copy<sup>1</sup> of which I have obtained and will enclose herewith.

Wherefore, again, at the expense of the burghers and merchants of this city of Nombre de Dios, a couple of frigates and a caravel are being armed to try to expel and drive these corsairs from this coast, especially the ships, galliots, launches and shallops propelled by oars, in order that the barks laden for the traffic to Cruces may pass. May God, Our Lord, grant that this be accomplished.

It is a pity that so many calamities, dangers and disturbances occur in this land; that the *cimarrones* are infinite in number; and that all this kingdom and the country of Darien, Acla and Veragua is little explored and dominated.

Being most beneficent and most Christian, your majesty will be pleased to apply a remedy to all this, which is all brought about by lack here of any to extend sympathetic commiseration.

May God preserve, and in estates, kingdoms and dominions ever increase your sacred Catholic royal majesty through many long years.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least and humblest servitor and vassal kisses your majesty's feet.

Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571.

*Cristóbal de Salinas* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 5.

## Document No. 8<sup>1</sup>

[Diego Flores de Valdés<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, March 16, 1571.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

... On the twenty-first of January I arrived in this port of Nombre de Dios in good condition (Our Lord be praised!), with all the vessels I took out from the bar of San Lucar... I encountered bad, and very adverse weather, from the Canaries to this port....

(p. 3) ... Your majesty is already informed how last year French ships and a shallop came to this coast and in the Chagre River took certain prizes and with them recrossed to France. These vessels have returned to this coast, to the same Chagre River, with a ship and a galliot which rows thirty oars and a pinnace which rows fifteen<sup>3</sup>. Before their arrival on this coast was known (p. 4) they took a bark out of the river itself, laden with clothing valued at more than 50,000 pesos.

As soon as I had news of it I went out after them with two galleons which I brought over, and a shallop. I went in search of them and to recover the prizes they had made; as indeed I took from them three frigates<sup>4</sup>, which I sent back to this port. Because the French were oared vessels I could not attack them, for they went where I could not follow with the galleons. Since the west wind blows a great deal along this, which is so dangerous a coast, I was compelled to return with the galleons to this port, where every preparation is being made for contingencies.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40, 2 *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> For his majesty, captain-general of the Tierra Firme fleet and armada.

<sup>3</sup> "This is the French ship which came to this coast a year ago. It has a galliot of thirty oars and two pinnaces which row fourteen and fifteen oars." Flores de Valdés to the House of Trade at Seville, Nombre de Dios, March 14, 1571, in *A. de I.* 41-6-1/36, *Contratación* 5101.

<sup>4</sup> Very possibly Azevedo's, and others which the rovers had abandoned.

At present I am equipping three frigates, with oars and sails, to return to seek the French. These frigates, now, are craft from which they cannot protect themselves as they did from the galleons. I sail tomorrow, God willing, to seek them out. I shall go with these frigates in person, or send with them Don Gerónimo de Narváez, admiral of this fleet, in order to attain the result I have explained to your majesty.

With these same frigates there will leave fourteen or fifteen barks, Chagre River craft, laden with clothing, to be escorted safely into the Chagre River. Thence I will go after the enemy.

This is, in effect, to have equipped here another squadron for the protection of the coasting trade. I have managed this at the city's expense, not your majesty's; and so it will be done, for they have offered to provide food supplies. Men and artillery I furnish from the fleet under my command. In this matter, measures for the good of your majesty's service will be taken, and of what may occur I will advise your majesty, if there be a ship.

As I was writing this for your majesty I received news that an English ship with an oared pinnace is anchored off Cativa Headland, which is eighteen leagues from this port. I shall endeavour to go after it also, once the business I have in hand is finished. And if the French and English combine I will seek them out together.

It is very necessary that there be, regularly, oared vessels available to patrol this coast, for it is the trade route of the Indies, and the channel of all the gold and silver collected for the fleets to convey to Spain. I leave this matter, however, until my return thither, when I will give (p. 5) your majesty an account of it, and of steps necessary to the remedy, lack of which I have experienced:...

...from this port of Nombre de Dios, March 16, 1571.

Your Catholic royal majesty's humble servant and loyal vassal,

*Diego Flores (Rubric)....*

## Document No. 9<sup>1</sup>

[Interrogatory, presented at Nombre de Dios, May 15, 1571.]

(p. 3)

...†

In the city of Nombre de Dios, in the kingdom of Tierra Firme called Castilla del Oro, America, on the fifteenth day of the month of May, of the year one thousand five hundred and seventy one, before the illustrious Señor Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda, king's counsel in the Royal *Audiencia* of Panama, *juez de residencia*<sup>2</sup> in this said city, and before me, Gaspar de los Reyes Paz, his majesty's notary, notary public, and clerk of the council of the said city, appeared García de Paz, councillor, majordomo and procurator of this city, who presented a petition of the following tenor:

Illustrious sir: I, García de Paz, councillor and majordomo and procurator for this city of Nombre de Dios, state that for the welfare and service of this city and kingdom it is desirable to inform his majesty of the serious robberies, assaults and damage which his majesty's subjects are suffering by sea from French and English corsairs, and concerning the numerous and important prizes these have taken, during the past two years, both ships and coasting craft, and also Chagre River barks which they have pursued up the river itself with galliots and pinnaces to within two leagues of the House at Cruces, (p. 4) where they have stolen a large quantity of clothing and merchandise, battering out the bottoms of many barks and sinking them.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-1 (755), Panama 32, 45 folios, original. The document is entitled "Depositions made before crown counsel of the *Audiencia* of Panama and *juez de residencia* there, year 1571, concerning robberies committed by French corsairs and *cimarrones*."

<sup>2</sup> I.e. special judge to conduct the inquisition into their administration, which it was usual to make as a governor and his subordinates delivered over their offices to their successors. Licentiate Nuñez de la Cerda was engaged in making such an investigation into the administration of the municipal authorities at Nombre de Dios.



As also of what his majesty's subjects have suffered from the *cimarrones*, who, coming forth to attack on the road from this city of Nombre de Dios to Panama, have killed many persons, stolen a great quantity of merchandise and gold and silver<sup>1</sup>, and daily enter into the towns and into this city and into that of Panama, carrying off to the wilds, and to the villages they have established, many negroes and negresses, the servants of the householders.

And to the end that these facts may appear before his majesty, that he may provide for and remedy the situation as may be for the best good of his royal service, I ask and petition your honour to receive the depositions of those witnesses I may present, examining them according to this interrogatory which I herewith present... (p. 7)...

1. Let all the witnesses be asked concerning their acquaintance with, and the length of their residence in, the country, and in this city of Nombre de Dios, and in Panama, in this kingdom of Tierra Firme.

2. Item, if they know that some time past a French corsair ship off this coast of Tierra Firme, between here and Cartagena, took a frigate, aboard which was Juan Ortiz de Zarate, from whom and other individuals they stole more than 100,000 *pesos* in gold in bars and silver...

3. Item, if they know that after the event mentioned in the preceding question, in the year 1569, other corsairs arrived as far as the mouth of the Chagre River and within the said river took two barks engaged in the Chagre River trade, on board which were Don Luis Enrique y Manzanedo and Pedro Gordo Rosales, from whom they took and stole more than 12,000 *pesos* in gold and silver bars, in addition to carrying off and stealing everything in the barks, (p. 8) which was flour and tanned hides and other things...

[4.] Item, if they know that after the event mentioned in the preceding question, off the coast of Veragua the said corsairs took a frigate out of Nicaragua, on board which was one Pina, from whom alone they got 30,000 *pesos* in silver and

<sup>1</sup> "... which they had taken from the Spaniards, rather to despise them than for love of gold." P. 281, *post*.

gold, the most of it in *reales*. . . all of which occurred while his majesty's fleet and armada were present on this coast.

5. Item, if they know that after the event mentioned in the preceding question, the said French and English corsairs looted and burned the village of Tolu, which is in this kingdom of Tierra Firme, between Nombre de Dios and Cartagena, the said corsairs entering by force of arms and leaving the village all desolate and destroyed, its citizens despoiled, poor, and some of them dead and wounded. . . .

6. Item, if they know that later, in the year 1570 just passed, the said French attempted to plunder the city of Concepción, in the province of Veragua, and would have done so, had not Our Lord God deigned to protect it, for, the weather being adverse to the said corsairs, they did not dare to approach the bar before the said town. . . .

(p. 9) 7. Item, if they know that in this present year of '71, the said French and English corsairs with a galliot and shallop went up the Chagre River after barks engaged in the river trade which carry merchandise, and took two or three of them, looted them, and destroyed great quantity of merchandise—silks, linens, wine, soap and oil and other very valuable things—to a total of more than 20,000 *pesos*. . . .

8. Item, if they know that after the events mentioned in the preceding questions, the said corsairs in the said Chagre River with the galliot or pinnace took the bark belonging to Baltazar de Melo, laden with clothing belonging to him and to Baltazar Dominguez (?), merchant, inflicting on these persons damage, in the loss of clothing and negroes and vessel, of more than 15,000 *pesos* in assayed silver. . . .

9. Item, if they know that after the event mentioned in the preceding question, the said French and English corsairs, on the Tierra Firme coast, near the Chagre River, encountered a small ship out of the Antilles, on board which was one Diego de Azevedo with his wife, household and slaves, all which they took, and plundered, killing the said Azevedo, and badly wounding Licentiate Luis de Soto who was with him, besides doing them further damage and affront. . . . (p. 10). . . .

10. Item, if they know that, after the event mentioned in

the preceding question, the said French and English corsairs again went up the river, arriving near the House at Cruces, which house is six leagues from the city of Panama, Pacific coast, and there took and stole a large amount of clothing and merchandise, which the said barks had unloaded for conveyance to the said House at Cruces, to the value of more than 10,000 *pesos*....

11. Item, if they know that, after the event mentioned in the preceding question, the said corsairs being in the said Chagre River, waiting for other barks to plunder, there came down in ballast a bark belonging to Diego de Çaballos, and another belonging to Juan de Ciria, and another belonging to Alonso de Paz, which they seized and staved, that they might not continue to the city to carry news concerning the said corsairs, which was a very serious loss to the aforesaid owners....

12. Item, if they know that, after the event mentioned in the preceding question, the said French and English corsairs lay off the coast between Bastimentos (Island), which is near Nombre de Dios, and Puerto Bello, and there in this month of May, of the current year of '71, took twelve or thirteen Chagre River barks, laden with clothing and merchandise, to an approximate value of 150,000 *pesos*; and, finding themselves in possession of so great a number, they selected two of these barks, loaded them with bales of clothing and boxes (f. 6) and carried them off, along with some slaves from the other barks, in so doing stealing in the clothing alone, exclusive of the barks and negroes, a value of more than 80,000 *pesos* in silver....

13. Item, if they know that, four or five days after the event mentioned in the preceding question, the said corsairs encountered on this said coast the frigate belonging to Salvatierra, carrying his majesty's advices and despatches for this kingdom and the provinces of Peru, which they took by force of arms, in the fight killing the said Salvatierra, burgher of Cartagena, who was carrying the said despatches; and that they boarded the said frigate and stole everything in it, and wounded many of the other persons on board the said frigate,

and maltreated and stripped a friar who was on board, insulting and affronting him, from which it was understood that these corsairs are Lutherans, enemies of our holy Catholic faith....

14. Item, if they know that after the said frigate had been looted and the said Salvatierra killed, and the others wounded and maltreated, (f. 6 r.) they took all the packages of letters, and threw some overboard, and tore up others, and spared only his majesty's despatches....

15. Item, if they know that for the last eight years corsairs have continuously beset this coast, doing much damage and committing many robberies, who every day learn the land and its ports more thoroughly, so that now they go up the river as far as the House at Cruces, a thing not ventured until this present time...<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> There follow questions on the advisability of a coast patrol and on the damage done by the *cimarrones*, estimated to number 2000. The depositions of witnesses support the interrogatory but add nothing to it.

## Document No. 10<sup>1</sup>

[Cristóbal de Salinas to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, May 20, 1571.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

By this fleet's despatch-boat, which left at the beginning of last March, I wrote to your majesty, of which despatch<sup>2</sup> a duplicate accompanies this one, to which I refer.

As to the happenings to be reported since that date, there has been a change in the situation as then described, for (thanks be to God!) ships have come down from Peru with a quantity of silver and merchants, who have disposed of their merchandise (that is, most of it). Further, your majesty's silver came down to a total of 230,160 *pesos* 5 *tomines* 8 *grains*, which is now being shipped, together with more than 11,000 *pesos* for your majesty's Council for the Indies. There go forward also on account of this kingdom, more than 115,000 *pesos*, proceeds from this fleet, as will be seen at length in the despatch we officials write to your majesty, and by the accounts sent of it all; as also will appear in the statement of accounts, to which I refer.

As to danger, and the damage and destruction done by corsairs along the coast, and by outlaw negroes on land, the situation grows worse daily, for neither the barks of the Chagre River trade to the House at Cruces nor the overland pack-trains have been able to make their journeys without being assaulted and robbed; and persons were killed, which is a pity.

Further, a frigate coming up from Cartagena with your majesty's despatches and letters for individuals, which had been left there by the despatch-boat sent from Seville to this kingdom, was attacked off Cativa Headland some twelve days

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 7.

ago by a launch carrying twenty-three Englishmen, who took it, killing one Salvatierra, owner of the vessel, and other persons. With the messages and letters, especially those intended for private persons, the English did as they pleased, throwing them into the sea, along with your majesty's despatches addressed to the viceroy of Peru and to the president of the *Audiencia* at Panama. A shallop sent from this city in search of the frigate brought her in, with the wounded who had been set ashore on an islet near the said Cativa Headland.

And the English, having accomplished this assault, returning again toward the Chagre River, near Puerto Bello boarded four out of eighteen laden barks encountered there, took from them what they chose of their bales of merchandise, abandoned three at sea, and made off with one and its negroes, sailing eastward to rejoin the captured frigate among the islands around Cativa.

These English are the same who sent the letter, a copy<sup>1</sup> of which accompanied the despatch I sent your majesty by the despatch-boat. For more than three months they have hung off this coast, between Cativa Headland and the Chagre River.

Because the *Audiencia* of Panama and this city are writing at length, informing your majesty fully, as, also as I have said, we officials are writing, I close this, praying Our Lord God to preserve the sacred Catholic royal person of your majesty through many years, increasing your majesty in estates, kingdoms and domains always.

From Nombre de Dios, May 20, 1571.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's most humble servant and vassal kisses your majesty's feet.

*Cristóbal de Salinas* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 5.

## Document No. 11<sup>1</sup>

[The *Audiencia* of Panama to the Crown,  
Panama, May 21, 1571.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

(p. 2) . . . In the despatch sent forward by the advice-boat we informed your majesty of the serious damage French and English corsairs had done this year on the Northern coast. Since then they have multiplied in number, and before and since, both on the sea and in Chagre River, have seized many barks coming up laden with merchandise to be discharged at the House at Cruces for transhipment to this city.

So great has been their audacity, that they have come up the river nearly to the House at Cruces and have taken barks in the river, and at sea they have seized ships and frigates coming from the Antilles and from Cartagena, and have killed and wounded many persons, and (p. 3) done other damage.

Lately they took a frigate coming from Cartagena with despatches which the advice-boat brought for this kingdom and for Peru, which it had left in Cartagena to be sent on, while the vessel itself went, they say, to New Spain with letters. The corsairs killed the owner of the frigate and other persons and set the wounded ashore, and to the present date we have not seen any despatch or order of your majesty's which was on board the frigate.

In all this they have done heavy damage, and although every possible effort has been made, and three expeditions have been sent out against them, no damage has been done to them nor have these sallies had any result. If they venture so much with the fleet and armada in port, it is presumed they

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (24), Panama 13, 2 *pliegos*, original.

will be bolder when these have gone and the port and town remain almost deserted....

(p. 6) ...Panama, May 21, 1571.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servants who kiss your majesty's royal hands and feet.

*The Licentiate Vera.*

*The Licentiate Diego Ortegon.*

*The Licentiate Alvaro de Carvajal.*

*The Licentiate Diego Fernandez de Villalta. (Rubrics)...*



## Document No. 12<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, May 24, 1571.]

(f. 187)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty...*

...there has been<sup>3</sup> on this coast a Frenchman or an Englishman with a pinnace, who has much disturbed the coast, and has committed many piracies, entering the Chagre River, by which merchandise goes up to Panama; and well within the river he has seized trading barks, and removed the merchandise they carried, and knocked out their bottoms.

And fifteen days ago, all the said barks having sailed laden from this city, he came out to them and took three, and threw all the bales they had on board into one, which he carried off. To do this, to make room, he threw overboard the wine-jars it carried.

He took a frigate which was coming up from Cartagena (f. 187 r.) with letters from your majesty and from private individuals, which letters had come in an advice-boat; and he killed the owner of the frigate and a seaman, and wounded seven or eight passengers, whom, with the other people on board the frigate, he set ashore on an uninhabited island, where they would have perished had not another frigate, which was coming along behind, arrived in this port with news that the first was bringing the said letters. When it did not come in, I sent out a shallop which brought the letters the pirates had left, being a large packet of your majesty's for the *Audiencia* at Lima and some belonging to private individuals; and the shallop also brought in as many of the passengers as it could carry. It has returned for the rest.

In search of this corsair, this city has sent out three ex-

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-21, 1, Panama 11, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> *Fiscal* of the *Audiencia*.

<sup>3</sup> During the four months the fleet had been in harbour.

peditions, on which were expended more than 4000 *pesos*; and he has always had the luck to escape. Once the fleet is gone, when the town and port are deserted, it is plain we are going to suffer from this corsair and others, unless your majesty apply the remedy hoped for, by sending a couple of galleys to protect and defend this coast and the town, which is in the greatest danger.

Awaiting this remedy by your majesty's order, whom God Our Lord preserve with increase of very much greater kingdoms and domains, etc.

From Nombre de Dios, May 24, 1571.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servant kisses your majesty's feet and hands,

*The Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda (Rubric) . . .*

## Document No. 13<sup>1</sup>

[The City of Panama to the Crown, May 25, 1571.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

The existing grave need, that your majesty deign to put an end to the great calamities and misfortunes which for some years past and especially at the present have wearied and afflicted this kingdom, moves this municipal council of Panama to furnish your majesty information concerning them, that your majesty may in the matter provide for the greatest good of the royal service.

The cause of much of the trouble has been the certain and wide-spread knowledge that this country has great wealth, and that to this city is sent all the gold, silver and pearls of Potosi, Chile and the rest of Peru, for shipment to Spain, and that from this city it is all sent to the city of Nombre de Dios by the Chagre River, from the House at Cruces, which is five leagues from this city by land. This knowledge has given courage to many French and English corsairs, many of them Lutherans, enemies of the holy Catholic faith, to come to sack the city of Nombre de Dios and plunder the barks in which the gold and silver goes down the Chagre River from this city to Nombre de Dios; in which barks also the major portion of all the merchandise brought from Spain is conveyed from Nombre de Dios to the House at Cruces.

Omitting the robberies and killings which they have committed in years past, since your majesty will have had news of them, we will recount only those which have occurred since the arrival at Nombre de Dios of the present fleet, of which Diego Flores de Valdés came for the third time as general.

One day in last Lent, at the mouth of the Chagre River, the corsairs left the ships in which they had crossed the

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-40 (212), Panama 30, 1 *pliego*, original.

ocean, and in a launch went thirteen leagues up the stream, where they took and looted a bark belonging to a citizen of Nombre de Dios, named Baltazar de Melo, laden with merchandise valued at more than 20,000 *pesos*; and on their return they stole what clothing there was in three or four other barks.

They took two laden frigates coming from Cartagena to Nombre de Dios. They killed many people, among them Diego de Azevedo, an inhabitant of Santo Domingo, and stole everything; and they did the same with another ship coming from Jamaica.

On learning of this, General Diego Flores de Valdés sailed in search of the corsairs with his flagship and vice-admiral and a caravel, well supplied with artillery. It was expected that his going would have some effect. He found the corsairs. He reconnoitred them and returned without approaching them, for he did not dare risk his ships, since the corsairs hugged the shore, and it is a rugged coast.

Next, Vice-Admiral Don Gerónimo de Narváez went after them with certain frigates on which the city of Nombre de Dios and private citizens expended 1000 *pesos* which they contributed for the purpose, supposing that the expedition would be of great benefit. He returned without doing anything.

Soon afterwards, a frigate coming up from Cartagena, with the despatches which the advice-boat brought was taken by these corsairs. They killed many people and plundered the vessel. They threw overboard your majesty's despatches and other mail which it carried, and set the survivors ashore on an uninhabited island to die of want.

(p. 2) Finally, in this present month of May, these same corsairs in the Chagre River took four barks laden with merchandise worth more than 70,000 *pesos*, and they are so fully in possession of the whole coast of Nombre de Dios, Cartagena, Tolu, Santa Marta and Cabo de la Vela, that traffic dares not sail from Santo Domingo thither, and trade and commerce are diminishing between the Windward Islands and this Main.

They have done, and continue to do, all these things without loss to themselves. The people of this realm are unable to prevent it, and much less can they prevent the heavy damage in robbery and death which the *cimarrones* have inflicted and continue to inflict daily, upon the highway from this city to Nombre de Dios and to the House at Cruces.

These negroes are so bold that, at night, they sneak into this city and into Nombre de Dios to steal, and carry off negroes, men and women, to the wilds. Some six nights ago, in the city of Nombre de Dios the *cimarrones* killed two Spaniards beside the House of Trade and made away unpunished. From El Chorrillo, where the negro women go to wash clothes, which is a harquebus shot from the place, the *cimarrones* carried off thirteen negresses, and they take them away daily from the river of this city.

The revenues of this city and of Nombre de Dios, and the contributions which their inhabitants have made, for the necessary expenses of patrolling the roads and dispersing the *cimarrones*, do not suffice; and henceforward they will be unable to contribute further, since for a year and a half these cities have at their own expense been maintaining General Esteban de Trexo and more than 150 effectives, who all this time have been engaged in dispersing the *cimarrones*. They have killed and captured many, but against the great number of them, greater remedy is necessary.

We have appealed to the *Audiencia* for protection, but inasmuch as this cannot be afforded without expending from the royal treasury, the court gives none, because they have no authorization to do so, although they perceive the great evils and damage done. They have ordered us to report to your majesty, that your majesty may deign to apply the remedy, of which at present there is none, for the reason stated.

Yet the president of this royal *Audiencia* did send Don Cristóbal Colon with a large number of inhabitants of this city to take the corsairs. These persons went to the House at Cruces, and came back again, because they had word that the corsairs had already departed.

In this, these cities have spent all they had, and have gone heavily into debt besides. The inhabitants are, for the most part, very poor and needy, because, in addition to the serious robberies they have suffered from the corsairs (which have totally ruined and destroyed many), many ships have been wrecked in the Pacific this past year, in which large fortunes have been lost. This, together with the increase in taxes exacted by the Crown, has so reduced the country and its people that it is impossible to contribute as hitherto they have done, against *cimarrones* and corsairs. . . .

(p. 3) Your majesty has many very loyal vassals in this realm who, whenever it was necessary, have not hesitated to lose their possessions and their lives in your majesty's service, and this realm is the key to the great provinces of Peru. They merit that your majesty deign to protect and defend them, and forestall the damage which will ensue if this country be abandoned by its colonists or come into the power of the French or English. This would mean the loss of Peru, which would be most detrimental to your majesty's interests.

The cure which might be found for all these things has been discussed by this council with Pedro de Ortega Valencia, high sheriff of this city and a member of its municipal council, that he may communicate it to your majesty; and we have charged him so to do.

We entreat your majesty to deign to hear him and give him credence in all that he may say on behalf of this council, for he is a man to whom credence may be given, because of his fidelity and prudence and the lively zeal he has always shown to serve your majesty, as he has always done. This council has confided to him this matter, which is of weight and magnitude, to remedy which is so important to your majesty's service and to the safe conservation of this realm.

Our Lord preserve your majesty a long and happy time, with increase of greater realms and dominions, amen.

Panama, May 25, 1571.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble vassals who kiss your majesty's royal feet.

*Martin Barrientos.*

*Juan de Vargas.*

*Pedro de la Roca.* (Rubrics)

(p. 4) . . . Seen; suitable action will be taken. . . .

## Document No. 14<sup>1</sup>

[Diego Mazariegos<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, Coro, October 29, 1571.]

(p. 1)

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### *Caesarian Catholic Royal Majesty...*

(p. 2) ... On July 20th of the current year three English vessels entered a port on this coast called Borburata. I had ordered the people there to hold no intercourse with any corsair. Seeing that there no one spoke to them, nor supplied them with any subsistence, although they landed men, since they had no interpreter, they departed, as has been said.

In the same month another corsair entered the port of this city, which is three leagues from it. I was warned by the guard, and with what Spaniards and Indians I could assemble I went to the port, where I found the ship. I prevented them from getting the water they desired and kept them from landing. When they saw the poor reception extended to them in the three days they were there, they presently sailed. I do not know what course they took. I think this ship carried about fifty men... (p. 3)....

... Done in the city of Coro, October 29, 1571.

Caesarian Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's faithful servant kisses your majesty's royal hands,

*Diego Mazariegos* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 54-4-15, Santo Domingo 193, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> His majesty's governor of the province of Venezuela.



## Document No. 15<sup>1</sup>

[Sancho Pardo Osorio<sup>2</sup> to Licentiate Ovando<sup>3</sup>,  
Havana, May 24, 1572.]

(p. 1)

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*Very Illustrious Sir*

...The report that the *adelantado*<sup>4</sup> was lost has been so general in the Indies that I presume it will have reached your court, and will have inspired in your lordship no little regret. Therefore I have desired to be the first, though only by a few days, to inform your lordship of the facts.

The *adelantado* left the fort at Saint Augustine on December 20 for this city, with two shallops and a small bark. As he was coasting along the Florida shore he was struck by a storm in which both shallops rode and lost sight of one another. The bark, which was farthest out to sea, did its best and put in here, affirming that the other two vessels would enter next day.

But one shallop was wrecked on the shore of the province of Ais itself. Being by heavy rains prevented from making use of their harquebuses, those (p. 2) on board were killed by the Indians, who spared not one, and burned the shallop.

With his own shallop the *adelantado* struck on Cape Cañaveral. Of planks and other wreckage he built a sort of fort, and with about thirty persons, armed with some wet harquebuses, he faced the [hostile] Indians and kept them off that day. That night he set out with such skill and fortune that, sometimes fighting the Indians and sometimes giving them of the little he had, he arrived without the loss of a man at Saint Augustine, a distance of thirty-one leagues.

Whither it seems that God led him by a miracle, that that fort<sup>5</sup> and the people in it should not be lost; for a few days

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-4/12 (3-15), *Patronato* 257, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> For Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, acting governor at Havana.

<sup>3</sup> President of the Council for Indies.

<sup>4</sup> Pedro Menéndez.

<sup>5</sup> I.e. Saint Augustine.

later there appeared off the fort three large English ships, carrying a large number of men. When they attacked, the fort was well defended. Perhaps, had it lacked so valiant a defender, it might have been in danger.

On April 10, having no other news of the *adelantado* than the above, a little frigate left this port, trusting to fortune to find him, as it did. He embarked aboard it and reached this harbour on Holy Friday. He was here fifteen days...<sup>1</sup>....

(p. 3) Havana, May 24, 1572.

Very Illustrious Sir

Your lordship's servant kisses your lordship's illustrious hands.

*Sancho Pardo Osorio* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> He left for Puerto Plata, on the north coast of Hayti, with the intention of attacking certain French corsairs he heard were at La Yaguana.

## Document No. 16<sup>1</sup>

[Sancho Pardo Osorio to the President and Officials  
of the House of Trade, Havana, May 25, 1572.]

(p. 1)

†

*Very Illustrious Sir*

... On the way from the fort at Saint Augustine with two shallops, the *Adelantado* Pedro Menéndez was wrecked on the Florida coast. One went aground in the province of Ais. It is believed that the Indians killed all on board. The other shallop, in which the *adelantado* was, struck on Cape Cañaveral, where, on shore, he fortified himself as best he could and faced the Indians that day. That night he set out for Saint Augustine, which is thirty-one leagues away, where he arrived, sometimes fighting the Indians and sometimes temporizing.

It seems that miraculously God brought him thither, for a few days later three large ships manned by English arrived off the fort and, had he not been there, would have taken the place and the people in it. They fought them and defended it against them.

On Holy Friday the *adelantado* reached this city. Leaving me with its government, he sailed for La Española...  
(p. 2)....

Havana, May 25, 1572.

Very Illustrious Sirs

Your servitor, who kisses your honors' very illustrious hands.

*Sancho Pardo Osorio* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> A. de I. 41-6-5/40, Contratación 5105,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pliego, original.

## Document No. 17<sup>1</sup>

[The *Audiencia* to the Crown, Panama, September 12, 1572.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

On August 21 of the present year 1572 Anton Couto, a Portuguese, arrived in the port of Nombre de Dios, with a caravel which he said came as an advice-boat to these parts, cleared on your majesty's order by the officials of the House of Trade at Seville<sup>2</sup>. He delivered no despatches from your majesty, or any other communication, because, he said, he was robbed by two English ships before he reached the port of Acla inlet. According to the instruction he carried he threw the despatches into the sea before he was boarded. These statements<sup>3</sup> were proven to be true according to depositions made before this royal *Audiencia*, record<sup>3</sup> of which accompanies this despatch. It would appear that the pilot was wholly to blame, for not calling at Santa Marta and Cartagena, as required by the said instruction. And so to the present

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Couto had sailed from Spain in the second half of May with despatches for various officials residing at Santa Marta and westward, warning them to expect French pirates. These lost despatches are preserved, in copy, in *A. de I.* 43-1-19/1, *Contratación* 5185. By November 27, 1572, Couto had reached Havana, whence on that date he wrote to the House of Trade a communication, preserved in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20 (38), *Patronato* 265, wherein he states that, the pilot having erred in his course, his caravel (the *Santa Catalina*) was taken between La Tortuga and the mouth of the Acla river by a launch manned by twenty-two English. He destroyed the despatches. "The corsairs carried me and my men prisoners to land, where they were established ashore in thatched houses, with a shipyard where they were making three launches (pinnaces). They had the sails of six ships ashore, with other equipment. They held us prisoners forty days, from July 14 of the present year to August 25, when they released us, and left us our ship, having taken the sails and principal equipment from us. God was pleased that with some pieces of sail we should make Nombre de Dios, and from there I went in person to the royal *Audiencia* at Panama to report." Cf. pp. 258, 274, *post*. The Portuguese was released when, being in reality bound for Darien, Drake desired to spread the impression that he had left the coast.

<sup>3</sup> Not seen.

date we have not learned your majesty's orders, to obey them. The port of Nombre de Dios has been put into the best condition possible, for defence; and Cartagena, Santa Marta and Honduras have been warned.

The English who plundered this caravel entered Nombre de Dios after midnight on July 29 of this year, the inhabitants being off their guard. They killed seven or eight persons, white and black. The townspeople assembled and fell upon them (p. 2) and compelled them to re-embark, some being killed and wounded. In passing they carried off a Canary Island ship which was in port with wines.

We do not here write at greater length to your majesty because this despatch goes forward at great risk, in the said caravel, and because the fleet is expected soon, by which we will write. From Peru or other parts there is no news to report to your majesty.

Our Lord preserve the Catholic royal person of your majesty many years, with increase of greater kingdoms.

Panama, September 12, 1572.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Humble servants of your majesty who kiss your majesty's royal hands and feet,

*The Licentiate Vera.*

*The Licentiate Diego Ortegon.*

*The Licentiate Alvaro de Carvajal. (Rubrics)...*

## Document No. 18<sup>1</sup>

[Martin de Mendoza<sup>2</sup>, his services, interrogatory and depositions, Cartagena, December 9, 1572.]

(p. 5) ... In the city of Cartagena, on the coast of Tierra Firme, in the Indies, on Tuesday, the ninth day of the month of December, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy two, before the illustrious Señor Francisco Bahamonde de Lugo, governor for his majesty and captain-general of this city and its jurisdiction... appeared Captain Martin de Mendoza, inhabitant of this said city, and presented this petition and interrogatory....

(p. 8) 8. ... Item, if they know that, the governor being absent<sup>3</sup> from this city, there appeared before this city and coast two ships and three pinnaces, English corsairs who had entered the city of Nombre de Dios and killed (p. 9) many persons and done damage there.

9. Item, if they know that in the same manner the said corsairs sought to land upon this coast, near this city, but, thanks to the careful watch which the campmaster and I, the said Captain Martin de Mendoza, kept here, the corsairs were perceived and did not dare to come ashore<sup>4</sup>.

10. Item, if they know that the said corsairs were more than two months<sup>5</sup> off this coast and port, capturing and burning coasting traders from this city and doing much damage...(p. 10)....

<sup>1</sup> A. de I. 72-5-11, Santa Fé 82, *Información*, 18 pliegos, certified copy.

<sup>2</sup> Omitted portions of this document, and other *informaciones*, consisting of depositions taken in Cuba, which are attached to it, show that this man had come to America some twenty years before, married well in Cuba (his wife was Catalina de Orellana), and at Cartagena served against corsairs under both Bustos and Bahamonde de Lugo.

<sup>3</sup> Governor Bahamonde de Lugo had gone into the interior on official business, leaving Cartagena to the protection of Campmaster Alvaro de Mendoza and this Martin de Mendoza, captain of Spanish infantry, when (August 13-14) Drake came up. Cf. p. 271, *post*.

<sup>4</sup> This apparently refers to Drake's second call (in mid-October), cf. p. 283, *post*. Suspecting ambushes, Drake forbade his men to land.

<sup>5</sup> From mid-August to past mid-October.

11. Item, if they know that, the aforesaid English corsairs being in this port, a frigate belonging to Captain Marmolejo, inhabitant of this city, came up from Nombre de Dios, carrying flour, and much gold and silver, and passengers, and that the said English corsairs attacked her with two pinnaces; and, by command of the governor, I, the said Captain Martin de Mendoza, assembled mounted men to go to the relief<sup>1</sup>. And, owing to my activity, with the first four or five mounted men I arrived at Point Hicacos, which is at the mouth of this city's harbour, where the said frigate had grounded, the persons on board having fled and abandoned the vessel, just as the English corsairs' two pinnaces were about to board her. (p. 11) Observing me, the said Captain Martin de Mendoza, and the party which arrived with me, they did not dare to board. They fired heavily on us with harquebuses and small culverins and withdrew, and we brought the said frigate safely into this city. Had it not been so promptly relieved the said corsairs would have taken it and its cargo, as they took other vessels which they burned off this coast. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 286, *post.*

## Document No. 19<sup>1</sup>

[Diego Flores de Valdés<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, February 20, 1573.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

By way of Santo Domingo I wrote to your majesty, reporting upon events up to that time... (p. 2)....

Of the two brigantines I brought, one was lost in the storm which struck the vice-admiral. This was serious, for it is needed on this coast, which I found in a pitiable condition, such is the state of affairs and the great unrest which the French and English have created here, as the *Audiencia* of this kingdom will report to your majesty, to which report<sup>3</sup> I would refer.

As soon as I arrived on this coast I manned the remaining brigantine with thirty men, Captain Alvaro Flores, my nephew, among them, and this vessel is escorting the barks which leave this port with merchandise which must go forward. Up to the present no mishap has befallen them, nor do I think any will befall while I am here, for, in case further protection be necessary, I have ordered another oared vessel to be built<sup>4</sup> in this harbour to accompany the brigantine. When they are not required to convoy the barks I will send them out to patrol the coast.

Since I arrived in this port, not a single enemy ship has appeared hereabouts. They have all withdrawn to Acla inlet, where they have rowing craft with which they have gone up a river which reaches to within four leagues of the Pacific.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40, 1 *pliego*, original. In 42-6-2/6 (IV, f. 242), *Contratación* 5168, is preserved a copy of a communication from the House of Trade to the crown, reporting a despatch of this same date from Diego Flores to them, of about the same tenor as this to the crown.

<sup>2</sup> Commanding his fourth Mainland fleet and armada.

<sup>3</sup> Not seen.

<sup>4</sup> p. 315, *post*.



Such has been their shamelessness that, seeing they could do no damage by sea, they went inland to within three leagues of Panama, to a halting-place called Venta de Chagre, and there one morning attacked a mule-train on its way to this port. They did serious damage, killing four Spaniards<sup>1</sup>. God was pleased that they should not fall in with another pack-train which was following with more than 100,000 *pesos*, for a soldier warned it, and it returned to Panama.

It is indeed lamentable that they should have dared so much; and the worst of it is that they have entered into a league with the *cimarrones*, who guided them to the place I have mentioned above, and have promised to guide them anywhere they desire to go. This is a matter it would be well to remedy very shortly, for I am informed (p. 3) that they are awaiting ships and men to enable them to take everything they can. I understand that they can accomplish their purposes because of the support they have. . . .

From this port of Nombre de Dios, February 20, 1573.

Your Catholic royal majesty's humble servant and loyal vassal,

*Diego Flores* (Rubric). . . .

<sup>1</sup> The *Audiencia* to the crown, April 27, 1573, in *A. de I.* 69-2-40, Panama 30, gives the casualties at six, including the Dominican friar.

## Document No. 20<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro de Ortega Valencia<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, February 22, 1573.]

(f. 113)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty . . .*

(f. 114) 12. This place is so alarmed and in such need (once the fleet shall have departed) of people to garrison it against the numerous *cimarrones*, and other negroes who run away to join them daily, that, unless the situation be remedied, they can readily enter it, and reduce the inhabitants and natives who remain here to deserting and destroying it, being unable to strengthen or hold it. Especially is this the case since this coast is so beset by such bold English corsairs, little afraid of any offence that can be done them from here, or of the city's even greater inability to defend itself against them. Our Lord's high favour, indeed, is requisite, if they are not to venture to do greater damage here than (even after the arrival of the fleet) they have done; and this damage has not been small, for they have taken two barks coming up from Cartagena, laden with flour and other provisions and goods.

And on the twenty-ninth of the month of January they went as far as the Venta de Chagre, and burned it, and in it killed four soldiers of the guard of the mule-train. They took a pack-train coming from Panama, and stole the silver it was carrying, killed some of the mules, and badly wounded a friar—one of the Dominicans who was proceeding to Panama, of those whom your majesty sent over in this fleet. Wherefore, since they have done these things at this time, it is to be presumed that they will venture to do worse when there shall not be as many people here as there are now. May your majesty deign to provide suitably in this matter, for this place

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-21, Panama 11, 2 *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Now factor for Tierra Firme. He had returned to Nombre de Dios with the fleet on January 5. Cf. pp. 34 *ante*; 112, 131, *post*.





is as good as lost; the English will destroy it, and hold the passes and highways in such manner that they can be dislodged only with difficulty.

13. Against the English the general sent out a brigantine and a pinnace, from the armada, with artillery and soldiers. They have returned, having lain off the mouth of the Chagre River many days without accomplishing anything, for they did not discover the corsairs. Afterwards there came in a frigate from Nicaragua which reports that the corsairs are beyond El Escudo and that they took a laden frigate.

They say that the French, who with the *cimarrones* arrived at the Venta de Chagre, went up thither by way of Acla. Consequently, they are masters of the land and of the sea, for there is no force available to go after them, nor is it possible to plan defence, since it cannot be foreseen at what point they will emerge....

(f. 115) 21. Before the fleet arrived here there was a great alarm in this town, because English enemies entered it at midnight and sought to burn and steal; and they would have accomplished their purpose had not Our Lord prevented, for all the people in the place were compelled to abandon their houses, wives, children and property. Most fled, both because they were few and taken by surprise, and also because the enemy arrived fully equipped for war, with artillery and harquebuses. To remedy the situation the president came in all possible haste from Panama. He was two days in the town; and returned in two days to Panama....

(f. 115 r.) ...Nombre de Dios, February 22, 1573.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least vassal and servant kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Pedro de Ortega Valencia* (Rubric).

## Document No. 21<sup>1</sup>

[The Municipal Council of Panama to the Crown,  
February 24, 1573.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

... This realm is at the present moment so terrified, and the spirits of all so disturbed, that we know not in what words to emphasize to your majesty the solicitude we make in this despatch, for we certainly believe that if remedial action be delayed, disaster is imminent, as here we will explain, as briefly as we can.

On July [2]9th of last year, the people of the port of Nombre de Dios being unprepared for what befell them, one night four launches of Lutheran English, carrying about eighty men, fell upon that city.

In military array, in two parties, they occupied the said city and held it, doing what evil and damage they could. In this assault they killed four or five men, and badly wounded as many more of its residents, who were powerless to resist or offend them, because the attack was a surprise.

The inhabitants were off their guard, and were few, and lost heart, supposing the enemy, since they had had the audacity to enter the town, to be more numerous than they were. The English walked about the place quite unmolested, and occupied the city and terrorized it through the rest of the night, until the inhabitants assembled and attacked them, and towards dawn compelled them to retire to their launches. They carried with them some booty taken from the town.

For its defence this royal *Audiencia* at the time sent down certain troops and aroused this realm for its own protection. The kingdom remained on the defensive, until Diego Flores' fleet arrived in the harbour of Nombre de Dios. It anchored there at the beginning of January, after these English had

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-40 (214), Panama 30, 1 *pliego*, original.

done much damage along this coast to the frigates and barks which they have met.

The last day of January, of this present year, as many as twenty of the said English and forty *cimarrones*, with whom they formed an alliance, made an assault on the highway between this city and that of Nombre de Dios, and on Venta de Chagre, which is six leagues from this city by land. In consequence, they killed three Spaniards and a friar of the Order of Saint Dominic, and mortally wounded five others, whites and negroes, all of whom were travelling by the highway. They burned the Venta and stole and burned a quantity of clothing and merchandise belonging to private individuals, and would have got more than 80,000 (p. 2) *pesos* in gold and silver, which a pack-train was conveying to the city of Nombre de Dios, had not God by a miracle preserved it from them. At half a league's distance from the enemy it was warned of them, and so this pack-train returned in flight into this city, where all the gold and silver it carried was saved.

By reason of the audacity of the English, in daring to approach by land so near to this city, and in having allied themselves with the *cimarrones*, this realm is in the state of alarm we have above mentioned; for the damage that may arise therefrom is appreciated because these English have so shamelessly opened the door and a way by which, with impunity, whenever they desire, they will attack the pack-trains travelling overland by this highway, which is the usual route, since it is the road by which must necessarily come and go the gold and silver, belonging to your majesty and to private persons, on the way to Spain, and the merchandise brought thence for Peru and this kingdom.

And the worst of all is the reliable news that these English and the *cimarrones*, with whom they are allied and confederated, have settled in a certain port of this coast, which is thirty leagues from here, from which base they sally forth to commit their assaults.

We hold it certain that the principal design of these English is to explore and study this land, and what strength there is in it, in order to come from England with more people to

plunder and occupy it. Some have even believed that the English armada<sup>1</sup>, which last year your majesty advised was coming to this kingdom to attack it, is in some bay, to throw us off our guard, and has sent these English who entered the city of Nombre de Dios and have committed depredations on the Chagre as scouts to discover by which way they can advance and occupy this realm to their greatest advantage. It is believed that they will attack this country if opportunity offer.

This league between the English and the negroes is very detrimental to this kingdom, because, being so thoroughly acquainted with the region and so expert in the bush, the negroes will show them methods and means to accomplish any evil design they may wish to carry out and execute. These startling developments have agitated and alarmed this kingdom. It is indeed most lamentable that the English and negroes should have combined against us, for the blacks are numerous.

Therefore, in this city and in Nombre de Dios we are keeping very careful watch, and a guard is posted every night as against these dangers and to forestall the numerous evils which may ensue therefrom.

Humbly we entreat your majesty to deign to send here prompt relief and defence, the best form for which we believe would be two galleys to patrol this coast, as we have many times previously asked your majesty to provide, for if the sea is safe we shall be safe on land... (p. 3)...

...Panama, February 24, 1573.

Catholic Royal Majesty

We, humble vassals, kiss your majesty's feet.

*Geronimo Nuñez.*

*Tristan de Silva Canpofrio.*

*Gonzalo de Carvajal.*

*Diego Fernandez* ——— [?]

*Juan Rodriguez Batista.* (Rubrics.)

<sup>1</sup> It was rumoured that a large fleet had left England to attack the Indies.



By order of the municipal authority,

*Agustin de Haro* (Rubric).

(p. 4) . . . Seen. Acknowledge receipt and say they have done well to report; to meet the situation it is ordered that the armada of the Indies guard go to defend these coasts, and it will arrive as soon or sooner than this despatch, and for them to inform its general of the needs which may arise . . . (Rubric).

## Document No. 22<sup>1</sup>

[Miguel Ordoño<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, Nombre de Dios,  
February 26, 1573.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

The fleet and armada under the command of Captain Flores de Valdés arrived safely in this port, and presently there came in the rest of the ships which made their course by Cape Verde. Having arrived with the fleet, we immediately went about such of your majesty's business as relates to revenues....

This coast and city are so harried by launches the English send out, and by their confederation with the *cimarrones* on land, that not a mule-train ventures to convey merchandise from here to Panama or to return thence, except in great fear, (p. 2) for they have damaged some of them, especially one they looted some twenty days ago, on its way to this city.

The attack occurred near the Venta de Chagre, which is six leagues from Panama. They burned that post, and there killed a friar of the Order of Saint Dominic, and three soldiers and passengers, and wounded others, as will at greater length appear in the depositions<sup>3</sup> in the matter sent forward by this city.

And if they do this while the fleet is here, it is presumed that when it shall have gone they will inflict much damage on all this land, since they are in league with the said *cimarrones*, who have guided them close to Panama. They can enter the Pacific to commit piracies on the ships coming down from Peru, from which will result grave damage.

That this may be avoided, we report to your majesty, that your majesty may deign to order the situation to be remedied

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Royal treasurer at Nombre de Dios.

<sup>3</sup> Not seen.

with all speed, since this is a matter of such great importance to the royal service and to the conservation and increase of the royal revenues and to the quietude of all the merchants of this kingdom and inhabitants of this city.

God preserve the Catholic royal person of your majesty with increase of many more kingdoms and dominions, as we, your majesty's servants, desire.

Nombre de Dios, February 26, 1573.

Your Catholic royal majesty's servants,

*Miguel Ordoño* (Rubric). . .<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This document is signed well toward the left of the page, space for another signature being provided at the right, obviously because another official was expected to sign who, for some reason or other, did not do so.

## Document No. 23<sup>1</sup>

[Depositions made at Panama and Nombre de Dios,  
Jorge Nuñez de Prado, his services, April, 1573.]

(p. 3)

+

... *Very Mighty Sir*<sup>2</sup>

I, Jorge Nuñez de Prado, native of the city of Jerez, state that approximately nine years ago I crossed to Tierra Firme to serve your highness<sup>3</sup>;

And, news arriving that nine corsair galleons<sup>4</sup> were expected, I went in person with my arms and servants to oppose the said corsairs, by order of Dr. Barros<sup>5</sup>, in company with General Nicolas Lopez<sup>6</sup>, and was so engaged until the rumours ceased and it was asserted that the enemy had gone; in which service I expended a large sum in gold *pesos*<sup>7</sup>.

And in the month of July of the past year 1572, eighty<sup>8</sup> English corsairs attacked the city of Nombre de Dios, entering at night<sup>9</sup>; who, because they entered at that hour, and because the guard was not on duty, killed many people<sup>10</sup> and did great damage. Because the people were off guard they did notable damage, and few persons were in the market-place of the said city of Nombre de Dios, for its defence, in company with *Alcalde* Antonio Juarez<sup>11</sup>, who at the time was the first

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-9, Panama 40, 15 *pliegos*, legalized copy.

<sup>2</sup> The *Audiencia* itself, which "enjoyed the treatment of highness."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 81, *post*, note No. 2.

<sup>4</sup> An omitted interrogatory seems to show that these were French, and that the date was 1565-6.

<sup>5</sup> Acting president of the *Audiencia* at the time.

<sup>6</sup> Barros made Lopez *alcalde mayor* and captain-general at Nombre de Dios.

<sup>7</sup> The matter comprised in this paragraph is covered by question No. 2 of the omitted interrogatory.

<sup>8</sup> p. 259, *post*, for statement that Drake's party was seventy-three.

<sup>9</sup> "... two hours after midnight..." [The omitted interrogatory, p. 6.]

<sup>10</sup> Tristan de Silva Canpofrio and Gonzalo de Carvajal to the crown, Panama, January 25, 1572, in *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2112), Panama 30, state that two Spaniards were killed and seven or eight wounded.

<sup>11</sup> Juarez de la Concha, the first witness mentioned below.

municipal authority. Among these few I was there, with my servants and my arms, in your highness' service. Had it not been for these persons, myself among them, the said city and its inhabitants would have incurred grave danger, and would have been lost<sup>1</sup>.

Because of this occurrence, it was resolved to maintain sentries; and in person with my arms and servants I stood sentry duty while it was necessary; and in this, in person, I served your highness<sup>2</sup>.

The said English in certain pinnaces appearing within sight, off the said city of Nombre de Dios, with a ship they had taken in its port, pursuit of the said English was ordered; and, believing that in so doing I was serving your highness, I immediately made ready with great diligence and persuaded many soldiers to embark with me for this purpose. With these people, I boarded a vessel which I equipped and fully prepared to pursue the said corsairs, General Miguel Hurtado being in command, and I adjutant of the said armada<sup>3</sup>;

After which, to serve your highness, I remained four months and more in the said city of Nombre de Dios, standing all the sentry duty assigned me by Captain Juan Juarez de Castilla; I maintained soldiers at my expense; and went forth at every call to arms, day and night<sup>4</sup>.

I went out to a certain ambushade which was laid for the said English<sup>5</sup>; and on this occasion I suffered much hardship, for we cut our way through rough country, and I crossed many rivers neck-deep in water, all which I endured in person with my arms and servants, at my own expense, venturing my life and expending a large amount of money.

When the fleet came, which entered Nombre de Dios in the year of '73, by order of the *Audiencia* of Panama at my own expense I busied myself in appraising the cargo unloaded

<sup>1</sup> The matter comprised in this paragraph is covered by question No. 3 of the omitted interrogatory.

<sup>2</sup> Covered by question No. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Covered by question No. 5.

<sup>4</sup> This and the paragraph following are covered by question No. 6.

<sup>5</sup> It was rumoured they had landed a league and a half or two leagues from Nombre de Dios. The party sent out against them returned very wet and muddy, having accomplished nothing.

by the said fleet, and I kept the account of the manifests of the said fleet, all of which was of great service to your highness and the royal exchequer, and contributed to the good and quick clearance of the said fleet.

Similarly, to serve your highness, I went out against the French who attacked the pack-trains from Panama at Campos River<sup>1</sup>, and owing to my exertion more than 30,000 *pesos* of your majesty's and your majesty's subjects' treasure which had been taken were recovered, all of (p. 4) which great service to your highness I rendered at my own expense; and to this date I have received no recognition nor any gratification, as all appears and is set forth by these depositions, which I present.

I ask and petition your highness, having in consideration my great services to your highness in the said kingdom of Tierra Firme, and to the fact that all were rendered at my own expense, without my having received any favour or recompense therefor, to bestow upon me the office of depositary for Panama, to which end, etc., etc.

*Jorge Nuñez de Prado*

(Rubric)...<sup>2</sup>.

(p. 7) In the city of Nombre de Dios, on the seventh day of the said month of April of the said year, the said Jorge Nuñez presented, as witness to this effect, Antonio Juarez de la Concha....

(p. 8) ...To the third question witness deposed that...at the time, in the month stated in the question, at one or two o'clock at night, there entered into the city an armed, attacking party of corsairs, whose presence was not felt until they were ashore and in the streets; and because the people were not prepared, they did much damage and killed certain persons. Being at the time *alcalde ordinario*, for the defence of this city against corsairs, deponent was in the market-place with some few persons, one of whom was the said Jorge

<sup>1</sup> Covered by pp. 32 *et seq.* of the document; omitted, as of little value.

<sup>2</sup> There follows the interrogatory, which has been omitted (because it adds nothing to this general statement). It was presented for the examination of witnesses at Nombre de Dios on April 7, 1573.

Nuñez, present with his arms and servants in his majesty's service and in defence of this city against the said corsairs; and he served at every opportunity as becomes a loyal servitor of his majesty, at great risk of his life. And it is certain that if those persons who were then in the square for the defence of the city, and in his majesty's service, had not been there, this city would have run very grave risk. Those who were then in the market-place were very effective in saving the city from sack and in resisting the corsairs and in driving them back to re-embark, as they did re-embark... (p. 13) ... This said day<sup>1</sup>, month and year, the said Jorge Nuñez presented García de Paz as witness to this effect, inhabitant of this city....

In reply to the third question witness deposed that... in the month of July of the year 1572, on Tuesday, the 29th of the said month, after midnight, an effective force of about a hundred corsairs—English and French or of other nationality—entered the city. They began to sound trumpets in the streets and to fire artillery (from four<sup>2</sup> pinnaces which they had brought close in to the shore) and to discharge harquebuses and arrows through the streets; and (p. 14) they killed some men and women, white and black, and wounded many more, in all thirty-two persons, as witness has deposed in his testimony<sup>3</sup> taken at the request of Licentiate Cerda, crown counsel in the royal *Audiencia* of Panama, to which he refers. Then, in the alarm and turmoil throughout the town, all or most of the residents left, fleeing into the country.

With Francisco Ramirez de Guzman and Joan Maria, owner of the wine-ship the said corsairs took, and Gonzalo de las Roelas and Pero Lopez, carpenter, and two other inhabitants of this city, whose names he does not at the moment recall, deponent resisted the said corsairs, opposing them in the streets, and twice they broke into the market-place. The third time, witness and Francisco Ramirez de Guzman having called out to the people of the town re-

<sup>1</sup> April 9, 1573.

<sup>2</sup> Drake's three pinnaces and Ransie's shallop. Cf. p. 259, *post*.

<sup>3</sup> Not seen.

peatedly, some inhabitants and residents in this city made a stand in the square. These were then some thirty-five or forty men, among whom deponent saw the said Jorge Nuñez with his arms, like the rest.

Deponent having sent a servant of Baltazar de Porras', whose name he does not at present recall, to learn the enemy's whereabouts, and this man having returned and reported, deponent came up to the corner of the market-place by the church, where is Navarro's shop, with the party which at the moment was defending this city, there being with him as many as eleven persons, whose names deponent has stated in other testimony he has given in this matter, and there they resisted the said corsairs and killed their trumpeter<sup>1</sup>, whose body remained in the market-place, and they wounded some six or seven others of the said corsairs, as was learned<sup>2</sup> afterwards. After which the said corsairs withdrew and went to re-embark in their pinnaces. . . .

In reply to the fifth question witness deposed . . . that Joan (p. 15) Maria above mentioned was present in this city, his said ship, with its cargo of wine, having been carried off; and he offered, if an expedition would go out against the corsairs to recover the said prize, to contribute 2000 *pesos* to the cost of the expedition. At high mass, Antonio Xuarez de la Concha, at the time *alcalde e justicia mayor*, being informed of this, committed to deponent the despatch of the said expedition and empowered him to name its commander.

And witness made Miguel Hurtado de Vera commander of the expedition, and he made Domingo de Agurto second in command, and named one Heredia to be adjutant, to go out upon the enterprise. And the said Miguel Hurtado, having assembled as many as seventy men for the expedition, made Jorge Nuñez his chief adjutant, who, exercising this office, got these men together and embarked with his flag.

The said force being so embarked, Domingo de Agurto y

<sup>1</sup> p. 267, *post*.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly on the return of the emissary sent to visit the English as they lay in their retreat near Bastimentos (pp. 267-9, *post*), to whom Drake showed his own wound.



Hevia had a certain disagreement with certain soldiers in the market-place, in consequence of which Gabriel de Navarrete, special judge who was then in the city prosecuting Miguel Hurtado and Gonzalo de Peñalosa and Joan Xuarez de Castilla and other persons, prevented the expedition and arrested Miguel Hurtado, that he might not sail on the enterprise. And so the troop which had embarked, landed again, and Jorge Nuñez, who had embarked with the said people for the undertaking, in two frigates and a large launch, came ashore....

## Document No. 24<sup>1</sup>

[Cristóbal Monte<sup>2</sup> to . . . (Nombre de Dios,  
very early in May, 1573).]

(p. 1) I have nothing to write of except the Englishman and the French who, as your honour will have heard there, encountered the despatch-boat. The Frenchman took Orozco in a hulk belonging to Albendin, and got news of the Englishman who was in the gulf of Acla, and went after him with the intention of fighting with him. He found him, but in the end they made friends and entered into an agreement.

With the *cimarrones* they waited, a league from Nombre de Dios, for the pack-trains—thirty French and English and fifty negroes. The train of merchandise passed, with certain harquebusiers guarding it, and they neither attacked it nor showed themselves. But the next day they fell upon the pack-trains passing which were carrying more than 200,000 *pesos*, of which they took 30,000 belonging to the king and hid all the gold and some bars.

A negro harquebusier who stood up to them killed the captain of the French, I mean, badly wounded him, and killed an Englishman and a *cimarron*.

The call to arms was sounded in the town; the people went out by land, and found the wounded captain and a French gentleman whom he had asked to stand by him. The latter fled and they killed the French captain that the rest might get away with the booty<sup>3</sup>. The one who fled came to the Factor's River and saw the king's negroes working on the

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 2-5-1/22 (72), *Patronato* 267, 1 *pliego*, simple copy.

<sup>2</sup> "As soon as the captain-general knew that the robbery had been committed he sent out Captain Cristóbal Monte with ten boats and shallops and armed men in them, to hold the mouth of the Francisca River, supposing that the launches were there. It was not supposed that they would land at the little inlet of Sardinilla, which is not rated a port. . . ." Francisco García, deposition, in *A. de I.* 51-4-15/26, *Justicia* 957, *Visita*, etc., p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. had they not killed him he might have been forced to give information that might have enabled the Spaniards to capture the rest and recover the booty.

dam, and since they are such friends with the *cimarrones* went up to them, thinking them *cimarrones*, and they seized him and brought him in and he was torn into quarters.

Those who went out by land sent word to the town that they had captured a negro alive and were carrying him along bound, as they followed along after the rest, (p. 2) and this man<sup>1</sup> said that their launches were three leagues up the Francisca River<sup>2</sup>. This news arrived at four in the afternoon and at vespers I went out with seven shallops and eighty-five picked harquebusiers with corselets, and artillery sufficient for the vessels.

That night the wind blew south south-west and we anchored at midnight between Sardinilla and the river, in order at dawn to come up to its mouth, as we did, although that night it rained so heavily that residents in the town were amazed at the downpour; which was such that powder, match and food supplies were all reduced to mud. At the point of the river we landed what we had to spare of masts, sails, resin, food and drink, and built a big fire, and, making use of the corselets, we quickly dried out the powder and match, and proceeded up stream to the source. We found not a trace of the enemy.

The fact was that, as becomes their calling, they did not arrive by a public entrance, fearing to do so, but came in by Sardinilla. They beached their shallops and hid them under branches, and left a guard set over them.

The night we slept at the river point they made off to the Headland. This was learned from a frigate they took. They said they had not seen the Frenchman who was killed pass by; and if they had not killed the captain he would have confessed where they were, and not a man would have escaped. But God willed it to fall out as it did that I might not gain honours and much money. Many passengers will be left poor who were retiring on their possessions.

<sup>1</sup> Fernandez Duro, *op. cit.* p. 341. Obviously, this man must have been examined before his execution. The editor has hunted vainly for his deposition. It might (as the following paragraph suggests) throw light on Drake's understanding with the *cimarrones*.

<sup>2</sup> This small stream near Nombre de Dios (see pp. 317, 319, *post*) is shown on various old maps.

I believe that these ships which have left (p. 3) England must be there, and if they take Nombre de Dios, Panama is theirs as easily as the words are said, for they have promised the Englishman 2000 negroes, and it is less distance and a better road, more thickly populated with negro camps, than that from Sevilla to San Lucar. If this be the case they have the means (as your honour knows) to settle along the Pacific and build ships outside Panama.

It will be necessary to provide the remedy.

Will your honour do me the favour to inform the factor of this matter, and those gentlemen who perhaps may not be aware of it, and will be glad to have the news? My desire is always to afford them pleasure.

(p. 4) Copy of Cristóbal Monte's letter. . . .

## Document No. 25<sup>1</sup>

[The *Audiencia* of Panama to the Crown, Panama, May 4, 1573.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty...*

(p. 5) ...Previously we have reported to your majesty the serious damage which has been done, and is being done daily, by English and French corsairs in this kingdom and on its northern coast, and the slight effect the galleons of General Pedro Menéndez de Avilés have had on the situation. We submitted opinions<sup>2</sup> on feasible measures, as your majesty ordered us to do; and your majesty was pleased to reply to us that suitable action would be taken. We entreat your majesty to deign to provide promptly in this matter, for so the good of the service requires. Daily they become bolder, and more frequent and serious is the damage they do; to remedy which, and in defence of your majesty's subjects and possessions, in agreement with the officials in charge of your majesty's royal revenues, we have expended therefrom certain amounts, according to your majesty's royal ordinance, for to do so was necessary and advisable for your majesty's royal service. We have spent with all possible moderation and restraint.

First, on June 23 of the year 1571 we received word from the city of Nombre de Dios that it was in danger of being entered (p. 6) and sacked by two French ships which were on that coast. Wherefore, for its safety and defence, it was resolved to send the Treasurer Baltazar de Sotomayor thither with fifty soldiers, appropriating for their pay and other necessary expenditures 1000 *pesos* in assayed silver from the royal treasury, the money to be delivered to Pedro Placa, who

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (26), Panama 13, 2½ *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> The *Audiencia* repeatedly urged the establishment of a coast patrol; cf. *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (24), Panama 13, that court to the crown, Panama, May 21, 1571. Neither the crown nor the colony was willing to pay for such a patrol. Both resorted to extemporized shifts which, in the long run, were more expensive than effective measures would have been.

was ordered to keep account and reckoning of the same, as appears in the enclosed certificate<sup>1</sup>, made out by Gabriel de Navarrete, clerk of the chamber of this *Audiencia*. Of which amount the account taken shows 882 *pesos* and 7 *tomines*, current silver, were spent and the balance returned to your majesty's royal treasury.

Similarly, on August 1 of last year, 1572, we learned that one night after midnight, on July 30 of that year, the city of Nombre de Dios had been entered by French and English, who killed four or five men, mortally wounded as many more, and carried off out of the port a ship laden with wine which had entered that day, and that among the municipal officers of the city differences and passions had arisen. For the town's defence and to maintain order we resolved to send thither an *alcalde mayor* and captain-general<sup>2</sup> with troops, including forty soldiers on your majesty's pay. To meet this expense, 1000 *pesos* in assayed silver were drawn from the royal treasury and delivered to Captain Hernando de Berrio, who went on this enterprise to serve your majesty, as appears in the resolution passed and in the enclosed certificate signed by Luis Sanchez, notary of the chamber of this *Audiencia*. The accounts which Captain Berrio rendered show that the said 1000 *pesos* were spent, and also 5 *pesos* more of current silver.

Similarly, on September 17 of the said year, to pay and sustain the said troops it was resolved to order to be delivered to the said Captain Berrio 600 *pesos* in addition, payable in the city of Nombre de Dios, in order that the officials of your majesty's royal treasury there might honour this warrant, and keep account and reckoning of the money, as appears in the resolution so taken, which accompanies this despatch.

Similarly, on October 1 of the said year, advice and letters having been received from the *alcalde mayor* of Nombre de Dios and the said Captain Berrio, that there were in sight off the port of the said city eight large vessels and two pinnaces, believed to be some of the twelve French galleons which it

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, as stated at the end of this despatch, its enclosures accompanied the first original, not seen.

<sup>2</sup> Diego Calderon; cf. Document No. 31.

was reported<sup>1</sup> were coming to destroy that town and its coast, for its defence and relief Don Diego de Teuez, high sheriff of this *Audiencia*, was made captain-general, and with him went to the said (p. 7)<sup>2</sup> of the soldiers and people who were to go, should be spent as might be necessary, and so there were taken from your majesty's royal treasury 2300 *pesos* of assayed silver, which were delivered to the said Don Diego, as appears in the resolution enclosed herewith; and from the account the said Don Diego rendered it appears that 2349 *pesos* and 7 current *pesos* were spent.

Further, on October 24 following, because of the news we had of the corsairs still about and the danger in which the said city of Nombre de Dios was, we resolved<sup>3</sup> that, pending this fleet's arrival, ninety-four men should constitute a garrison for its defence, these men all to be paid from your majesty's royal revenues, and that the thirty who were not housed should be maintained from these revenues. On these men, both in their maintenance and also in pay, we are advised that, including the 600 *pesos* paid over to the said Captain Berrio, about 1620 *pesos*, assayed silver, will have been spent, in addition to another 2030 *pesos* in current silver, of which the said officers of your majesty's royal treasury at Nombre de Dios have kept account, and concerning which they will report at greater length.

After this was written from the city of Nombre de Dios we were advised that certain English and French corsairs, together with a number of *cimarrones*, at a point near the said

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 109-1-8, x, f. 259 reverse, *cédula*, Madrid, October 21, 1571, to the *Audiencia*, transmitting news from France to the effect that French corsairs were planning to continue their activities in the Chagre, and bidding the *Audiencia* prepare Nombre de Dios and other ports to resist aggression.

<sup>2</sup> The document transcribed is apparently a *duplicado*, i.e. a second original; but there is a break in the text as it passes from p. 6 to p. 7. It would appear that what we have here is, really, 1 *pliego* of the first original and one of the second. Fortunately, the meaning of the communication is not obscured.

<sup>3</sup> *A. de I.* 109-6-11, the resolution. These 94 men were not reinforcements; merely, measures were taken, in view of the latest news of corsairs, to assure the pay and so the stability of a garrison of 94 men, presumably those already at Nombre de Dios, for defence of that port.

city, attacked certain mule-trains conveying gold and silver from this city to that of Nombre de Dios, stealing a great amount of gold and silver, among this being 18,300 *pesos* of fine gold which came for your majesty from the jurisdiction of Popayan.<sup>1</sup>

Although the mule-trains were accompanied by guards, these could not resist, because the attacking party was large, and because, being near the city, where they thought there was no danger, they were travelling in some disorder, according to what has been written us; although we are not yet certainly informed in full, nor has testimony been sent us. They write that they took, and are taking in that city, what measures they can, and from here we have issued the instructions we considered suitable; and we have ordered that from there a full report be sent to your majesty.

Until your majesty shall more adequately provide, for the time being we have thought best to station sixty soldiers, paid from your majesty's revenues, at Nombre de Dios, under a captain and *alcalde mayor*, that, with the townspeople, he may defend the place, for, the fleet gone, it runs grave risk, and unless this garrison were so stationed that town would unquestionably be deserted, since the inhabitants are not sufficient for its protection. We have taken this measure in agreement with the officers in charge of your majesty's royal revenues.

We entreat your majesty promptly to take measures necessary to the defence of this coast and kingdom, for it is considered certain that the corsairs who have now left will return in greater force, and it is even said (p. 8) that they announce that they will settle. From such a settlement all this kingdom would suffer great damage, and your majesty's service serious detriment. To offend them on the sea and to prevent them from landing on the coast of this kingdom, is beyond our ability; and General Diego Flores has not been willing to pursue them or to occupy himself in the matter, although they have been on this coast and very near him while he also was here....

Panama, May 4, 1573.

<sup>1</sup> In south-western Colombia.



Despatches and testimony, mentioned in this letter, accompany the first copy hereof.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servants who kiss your majesty's royal hands and feet,

*The Licentiate Diego Ortegon.*

*The Licentiate Alvaro de Carvajal. (Rubrics) . . .*

## Document No. 26<sup>1</sup>

[The Royal Officials of Panama to the Crown, May 9, 1573.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

...An assault by corsairs has been made in this kingdom, which has resulted in the losses and damages we will here briefly relate.

On the 29th of last April, as the pack-trains engaged in the overland traffic of this realm were proceeding under guard, and with the defence of soldiers and troops considered necessary, from this city to that of Nombre de Dios, with gold and silver belonging to your majesty and to private persons, to be laden on board ships of the fleet, when they had arrived about a league and a half from that city, there came forth to take the gold and silver carried by these pack-trains a certain number of English, French and *cimarrones*, who are negroes who have run away from their masters and advertise that they have allied and confederated themselves with the English and French to destroy this realm, a thing not until this year ever seen or imagined.

The soldiers and other people who were there to protect them being unable to prevent it, they took from the pack-train more than 100,000 *pesos*, all in gold, including 18,363 *pesos* 5 *tomines* and 2 *grains*...consigned to your majesty.

With this prize they made off, rapidly and in military order, this realm being powerless to prevent or hinder, although proper efforts to do so were made.

We regret this occurrence as deeply as it is reasonable to suppose, and what grieves us most is to see with our own eyes the ruin of this realm imminent unless your majesty remedy the situation promptly.

It follows that the conspiracy of these corsairs and *cimar-*

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2114), Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original.

*rones* must entail much damage upon this kingdom, for the *cimarrones* have opened the way by which the corsairs have shamelessly arrived by land within four leagues of this city.

For, as your majesty will learn in greater detail from other despatches written concerning this matter, one day in January of this year, the said conspirators made another attack as near as that to this city, and killed many Spaniards, and worked great cruelty upon a certain friar.

According to the confession of one of the French, taken at the time of this latest attack, it is shown that they have entered into close amity and confederation with the negroes and have promised them that, once this fleet shall have gone from the harbour of the city of Nombre de Dios, they will sack that place and deliver to them what Spanish inhabitants, men and women, it may have, to be their slaves.

We remark this that your majesty may comprehend the shamelessness of these persons, and realize to what affliction and oppression this realm has been brought by the calamities it anticipates, arising out of this alliance. It entails such detriment to traders and merchants that only with the very greatest danger can they get their merchandise over. They endeavour to send it under guard of forces sufficient for defence, out of which arise heavy costs and expenses.

It is expected that, encouraged by the very valuable booty they have secured, these corsairs will return to this realm in very much greater strength, and by means of their federation with the negroes so situate themselves as to succeed in any venture they may undertake.

We report to your majesty on this in order that, all these undesirable possibilities being foreseen and weighed, as becomes so very Christian a king and lord, your majesty may take pity upon this, your majesty's so sorely afflicted realm.

It is a sad thing to contemplate the men who have been ruined by this attack. And what moves to greater compassion is the fact that many of them were retiring to Spain with their fortunes made by the labour of many years in other parts—some of them are from Chile, which are very remote and distant provinces—only a league and a half from the city of

Nombre de Dios (p. 2) to be robbed by corsairs and left destroyed, ruined!

... We believe that until galleys are stationed on this coast there will be no safety here.

So far we have not been informed that any of your majesty's gold which these corsairs took has been recovered. If any of it reappears the officials of Nombre de Dios will advise your majesty....

...Panama, May 9, 1573.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servitors and vassals kiss your Catholic royal majesty's feet.

*Tristan de Silva Canpofrio.*

*Gonzalo de Carvajal.* (Rubrics) (p. 4)

...received August 26, same year, and seen next day....

## Document No. 27<sup>1</sup>

[The Royal Officials of Nombre de Dios to the Crown,  
May 13, 1573.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

... Some fifteen days ago your majesty's officials who reside in Panama forwarded 18,300 *pesos* in gold which had been sent down on your majesty's (p. 2) account from Popayan, and two leagues from this city, on the highroad the pack-train conveying this amount, while proceeding in company with three others laden with gold and silver, was assaulted by French and English corsairs and a multitude of *cimarrones*, who carried off more than 80,000 *pesos* in gold.

Our best efforts to find this gold, either on the highway where the attack occurred, or along the trail the corsairs left, by which they were followed, have availed to recover of the said 18,300 *pesos*, which were coming down by the pack-trains for your majesty, only ten gold bricks worth 6308 *pesos* 4 *tomines*, by the carats shown, as appears by the account we remit to your majesty.

Inasmuch as the damage which these corsairs have done, and the danger to which this realm is exposed by their having allied themselves with the *cimarrones*, will be clear from the evidence and despatch which this city's council sends your majesty, we refer to those papers and do not take up these matters in this communication....

... Nombre de Dios, May 13, 1573.

Servitors of your Catholic royal majesty,

*Miguel Ordoño.*

*Juan Cristóbal de Castilla* (Rubrics)... (p. 4)

... received August 29 said year. Seen the same day....

## Document No. 28<sup>1</sup>

[The City of Nombre de Dios to the Crown, May 14, 1573.]

(f. 208)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

The municipal council of this city of Nombre de Dios has already reported to your majesty on events in this kingdom and of the outcome expected if there should be delay in remedial measures against corsairs and *cimarrones*. Lack of such measures has given these men, who are active, opportunity to accomplish their object by land and sea, to prevent which we are unable except by your majesty's assistance and favour.

For the French and English corsairs have entered into league and amity with the *cimarrones* in the back country, who number more than 3000. Although the Licentiate Diego García is going to Spain to report all these events to your majesty (and credence may be given him, for in addition to being a cultured man, he is an old-established resident of this kingdom, and has had much experience here), nevertheless, we will here briefly advise your majesty of what is occurring in this kingdom.

These corsairs have committed important piracies and have killed on such a scale that within the last seven years they have killed more than 300 persons on land and sea, and have stolen and carried off more than two millions in gold and silver. Lately (in the month of June, 1572) English corsairs entered this city, wounded many of its defenders, and killed nine.

Afterwards they entered into a confederation with the *cimarrones* of the back country, and aided and guided by them, crossed overland as far as the city of Panama. In the month of March of the current year they pillaged and burned Venta de Chagre, where they killed four inhabitants and a Dominican friar and wounded many other persons.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-21, Panama 11, 1 *pliego*, original.

Accompanied by French corsairs who joined them presently, these same English, guided by the said *cimarrones* of the back country, on April 29 of the current year appeared on the highroad from the city of Panama to this city of Nombre de Dios, and two leagues from the latter stole more than 150,000 *pesos* in gold and silver, included in which amount were (f. 208 r.) 20,000 *pesos* of gold on the way from the jurisdiction of Popayan to your majesty.

On receipt of this news, authorities went out from this city in all haste and gathered up a certain amount in bars of silver and gold, which the corsairs abandoned because they could not transport them. They killed two of these corsairs and one of the *cimarrones*, among them the French captain, according to the identification of the body made by another Frenchman who was taken prisoner as he wandered lost in the bush. He was presently executed. His confession and other testimony go forward by the Licentiate Diego García, who is instructed to petition your majesty for measures necessary to the preservation of this land.

We entreat your majesty to deign to hear us and to take promptly the action we hope for from your majesty, since haste is what is most needed for the welfare of this land and of the provinces of Peru and good of your majesty's service. In the meantime we will do our part by placing our persons and our property, as is our duty, at the service of your majesty, whose Catholic royal person God preserve many years with increase of more kingdoms and dominions.

Nombre de Dios, May 14, 1573.

Your Catholic royal majesty's vassals and servants.

*Diego Calderon.*

*Rodrigo de Salinas.*

*Juan Ordoño.*

*Juan Cristóbal de Castilla.*

*Baltazar de Porras.*

*Francisco Ortiz.*

*Gaspar* ————[?]

Clerk of the Council.

(Rubrics)...

## Document No. 29<sup>1</sup>

[Dr Villalobos<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, Guatemala, May 15, 1573.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty. . .*

(p. 2) . . . In the month of February a little frigate<sup>3</sup> sailed along the coast of Veragua to the mouth of El Desaguadero<sup>4</sup>. She carried thirteen Englishmen. Her armament was eighteen small culverins and two larger pieces, all ready for action. They seized four frigates which had sailed from the province of Nicaragua (from the city of Leon and from the city of Granada) and were bound to Nombre de Dios to sell poultry, maize and such like<sup>5</sup>.

On Holy Thursday, in the afternoon, these same English with a frigate and a pinnace and a skiff arrived at La Guanaja, which is an island close to the city of Trujillo. They were guided by Antonio Vaez<sup>6</sup>, Portuguese, and two Spaniards whom they had made prisoners (p. 3) at Cape Cameron, where

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-9 (173), Guatemala 9, 2 *pliegos*, original, duplicated.

<sup>2</sup> President of the *Audiencia*.

<sup>3</sup> Drake in the *Minion* pinnace? Cf. pp. xliii *ante*, 314 *et seq.*, *post*.

<sup>4</sup> The San Juan river, between Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

<sup>5</sup> p. 315, *post* mentions that Oxenham in the *Bear* had taken a good prize carrying just such a cargo. It would seem, however, since he had sailed for Tolu, that this seizure must have occurred far to the south and east of Veragua. Yet it is possible that the rendezvous where the pinnaces met was such that they were together at La Guanaja on Shrove Thursday and yet, with a good westerly wind, by Sunday had returned to Slaughter Island, where they feasted on Easter Day. Or it may well have been that Drake and Oxenham were not the only Englishmen off these coasts at this time. John Noble may have been present; cf. Document No. 32.

"Captain Diego Lopez, governor of the province of Honduras, in his letter of May 15, 1573, informs his majesty that on March 25 of that year an Englishman arrived there from thieving along the Mainland coast, with a *zabra*, and a launch, mounting plenty of artillery, well supplied with munitions of war, its purpose being to rob and to do damage. The *zabra's* captain is named Mestran [Oxenham?] and the owner, Thomas Vique." Memorandum of advices, etc. Madrid (?), 1575 (?), in *A. de I.* 2-5-1/20 (29), *Patronato* 265. This incident is mentioned in *A. de I.* 2-5-2/21 (1), *Patronato* 266.

<sup>6</sup> p. xliii *ante*.



these men had been held captives among the Indians. Seven years before in company with Licentiate Ortiz they had gone to Tegucigalpa and there they had remained, lost.

These two gave the English to understand that they would persuade the Indians of the island to give them food supplies and what they might need. As soon as they reached land they made off among the Indians, who brought them in a canoe to Trujillo, where they now are.

From Trujillo forty soldiers set out in a small ship in search of the Englishman. They say they did not find him, and that he had sailed, steering a northerly course.

I had written to the town council to be on the alert to attack these English if they called; and I warned Puerto de Caballos to be ready, advising that I understood these people were going to do damage in that place. Similarly, they intended to enter Golfo Dulce and pillage certain Spanish establishments which are at the landing place, where there is a quantity of wine and merchandise. Care will be taken to settle some Indians in a location such that they can send warning if any vessels seek to enter where those Spanish houses are, for if they are warned they can defend themselves... (p. 6)....

Santiago de Guatemala, May 15, 1573.

Your majesty's servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Doctor Villalobos (Rubric).*

...<sup>1</sup> What he has done is approved; and let all possible measures be taken to capture these and any others who may appear there.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal decree.

## Document No. 30<sup>1</sup>

[Depositions, Juan Bautista Manuel and Alvaro Flores,  
made at Seville, September 28–October 6, 1573.]

(p. 1) In the city of Seville, on Monday, the twenty-eighth day of the month of September in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy three, . . . Juan Bautista Manuel, chief clerk of the . . . fleet and armada, deposed that . . .<sup>2</sup>

(p. 3) . . . The said fleet and armada lying at anchor in the harbour of Nombre de Dios, at the end of a month, or thereabouts, after its arrival there, it was publicly rumoured that off the Main, on the Nombre de Dios coast, at the headland called Captivas, there were two corsair ships, one English, the other French. According to what was reported, each was working separately at first; afterwards, they made an agreement and worked together.

*Two corsair ships were off the coast of Tierra Firme, and one went to Veragua.*

At the end of about a month it was also publicly reported that one of them had gone toward Veragua, and the others remained in that vicinity, or off some part of the Tierra Firme coast.

*No orders were issued or measures taken against these corsair ships, to pursue or seize or destroy them, except as here stated.*

Against which ships no order was issued nor any measure taken to pursue or destroy or seize them, that this witness observed or heard of, except that when it was learned that, with the intention of pillaging them, certain launches belonging to these ships were lying in wait for the barks which were transporting merchandise up the Chagre River, Captain-General Diego Flores ordered Alvaro Flores, then a captain of infantry, with seamen and soldiers, to proceed in a brigantine which had been brought from Spain with the fleet and armada, to find the said launches, to take them if he could, and so rid that coast of the said launches in order that the barks transporting merchandise might come and go in safety.

He issued similar orders with respect to Veragua, for there

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 51-4-15/26, *Justicia* 957. Approximately 250ff., original. This document is the record of the "*visita y residencia*," i.e. the usual inquisition made by Doctor Alexo Salgado Correa, of the House of Trade, into Captain-General Diego Flores' (and his subordinates') conduct of the Tierra Firme fleet for the year 1573.

<sup>2</sup> All deponents were duly sworn.

was news that other launches (from the ship which was off that coast) were out there, openly pillaging.

This brigantine, armed and well provisioned, went out three times to the Chagre business and once to Veragua, and was busied in this service all the time the fleet was there, (p. 4) after the news was received, excepting some fifteen days prior to the fleet's departure for Spain; and each time the brigantine carried some thirty persons, seamen and soldiers.

Deponent believes that even if the general desired to take measures to go to seize the said corsair ships, this was not possible to him, because it was understood that anything that went on in Nombre de Dios was immediately known to the corsairs; because they had very swift ships and did not always remain in any one place; and especially since at that time the west wind blew, which was adverse to any possibility of following them, for when the west wind blows ships cannot leave the harbour or navigate.

Asked concerning the robbery of gold and silver belonging to his majesty and private individuals, committed by certain corsairs on the road between the city of Panama and that of Nombre de Dios. . . witness deposed that he was at the time of this event in the city of Nombre de Dios and did not see where or how it happened except that, being, as said, in the city of Nombre de Dios he heard the news that certain French and English, favoured and guided by the *cimarrones*, had come in through the bush as far as the Panama highway and had been encamped there some fifteen days, waiting for the pack-trains to appear with the silver and gold from Panama.

*How the robbery occurred, which the corsairs committed, of gold and silver on the way from Panama.*

And when a pack-train came they sallied out and began to pillage. Supposing the corsairs to be more numerous than it later appeared that they were, those who accompanied it fled and abandoned the pack-train; those who were nearest to Panama ran that way, and those who were on the Nombre de Dios side ran into that city.

As soon as they arrived, the *alcalde mayor* ordered the drum to beat, brought forth the standard, and issued a proclamation bidding all to follow him on penalty of being adjudged traitors, and he set out in search of the corsairs.

This party arrived shortly at the place where the robbery had occurred, which was about a league and a half from Nombre de Dios. In the road they found a quantity of gold and silver, and went into the bush, following the trail of the corsairs until night fell. Because it was a dark night and rough country (p. 5) they lost the trail, for which reason, and because they had no food supplies, they gave up the chase, returned to the scene of the assault, and worked to gather up the gold and silver they found, which they brought to Nombre de Dios.

As soon as he heard of the robbery (from those who had arrived, fleeing away from the pack-train), supposing that the corsairs with their launches had entered by the Francisca River, immediately, in all haste, General Diego Flores made ready seven or eight of the ship's boats, the pick of the whole fleet, and in each sent a ship's master chosen from those of best repute among them all, with artillery and harquebuses and other arms, and soldiers and seamen, to a total of about ninety men, with orders to find these corsairs and take the booty from them, and arrest them.

These boats went in pursuit as far as the Francisca River and searched its whole length, and were so engaged two or three days, when they returned to port, having found no corsairs, neither launches nor signs where they might have entered.

Later, certain of the king's negroes captured an Englishman and from him it was learned that the corsairs did not enter by the Francisca River, but by the Sardinilla, and that there they had hidden their launches under shelters made of branches of trees. So also deponent stated that when he sent out these . . . boats, the general was preparing to go in person on this business, but while he was making ready he was taken with fever and forthwith went to his bed on shore. He was sick seven or eight days at that time, and the fever developed into tertian fever, from which he still suffers. . . .

*The general  
did not go in  
person, and  
why he did  
not.*

(p. 58) . . . In the said city of Seville, on the sixth day of the month of October . . . Captain Alvaro Flores . . . deposed. . . .

That, as soon as the said fleet and armada reached Carta-

gena they had news that certain French launches were off that coast, and by order of the said general deponent cleared from there immediately with the brigantine, well armed and equipped, to find and seize them. Deponent sought for them in places where he believed he might find them, but he did not find them, and so returned to Cartagena. The said fleet and armada proceeded thence to Nombre de Dios and there they had news that a launch was off the Chagre coast. By order of the said general deponent went out with the said brigantine, well armed, and hunted for this launch, to seize it, and along with the brigantine he took a frigate, also armed, manned and well supplied, and he sailed up and down the whole coast of Chagre, hunting for the launch, and did not find it.

*News in  
Cartagena  
of launches  
along the  
coast.*

*News at  
Nombre de  
Dios of a  
launch off the  
Chagre coast.*

Having news that the enemy had gone (p. 59) as far as the way-station of Chagre and burned it (for the general informed deponent and ordered him to keep a close watch on the river), deponent remained there on the watch, exercising care and diligence; and supposing that perhaps the enemy had gone into ambush up the river, since he had not seen him despite the careful watch maintained, deponent proceeded fifteen or sixteen leagues up the stream, which is as far as he could go, since the brigantine could navigate no higher, still seeking the said launch with all insistence and diligence possible, but he could not find it, nor did he find it, and so again returned.

And again deponent cleared with the brigantine, well armed and equipped, convoying and protecting twenty-eight barks which left Nombre de Dios with freight for Chagre. Deponent remained with them until he saw them into safety, and on that occasion he neither sighted nor encountered the said launch nor any corsair ship, or anything of the sort, and returned to the harbour of Nombre de Dios.

About eight days later there was news that the French corsair, with a ship and a well-armed launch, was off the coast, between Veragua and the port they call El Escudo. By order of the said general deponent went to seek them with the brigantine and arrived at the very harbour of Veragua and there saw a French ship and its launch. They had taken a

*A well-armed  
corsair ship  
and a launch  
on the  
Veragua  
coast....*

frigate which was coming up, laden with merchandise, from Cartagena, worth over 80,000 ducats. Witness came to this vessel's support with the brigantine and saved it, at very great risk, and threw it a line and brought it in with him to the port of Veragua. To compel the corsair to give it up he fired hotly upon him with his artillery, in consequence of which, although the Frenchman actually had the frigate in his possession, deponent recovered it from him and brought it safely into the said port of Veragua.

Having left it there, safe, deponent again cleared with his brigantine, against this corsair, having refreshed and re-inforced himself in the said port of Veragua; and the corsair fled from him, and departed.

And as deponent pursued there came up a frigate which, like the first, was coming up with a cargo of merchandise; upon which the said corsair turned to take her. Deponent also steered for this frigate, to relieve her, and he reinforced her with men and weapons. The brigantine lying beside her, awaiting the enemy ship, to fight it and its launch, if they sought the encounter, the said ship withdrew and made off, toward the open sea. Deponent then brought the frigate to the port of Veragua and placed her in safety, and from there coasted more than forty leagues toward Nombre de Dios, hunting the said launch, if by chance the said ship had sent it to any of those harbours, but in fact deponent did not find it, but with the brigantine put in at Nombre de Dios...

## Document No. 31<sup>1</sup>

[Diego Calderon, his services; depositions made at Panama,  
April 22, 1574.]

(f. 6) *Very Powerful Sir*<sup>2</sup>

I, Diego Calderon<sup>3</sup>, your former *alcalde mayor* and captain-general in the city of Nombre de Dios, state that...having arrived in the province of Tierra Firme, in this city of Panama, seat of the royal *Audiencia*, and English and French corsairs having on the north coast of Tierra Firme seized many ships and frigates and barks, and in them killed many of your subjects, and from them stolen large quantities of *pesos* in gold; having dared to enter and take and sack the city of Nombre de Dios, where they killed many residents and transients in the said city; in view of the necessity of acting in the matter, your president and judges provided and ordered me to go to reside there.

In defence of the said city I served your highness as *alcalde mayor* and captain-general without pay, all at my cost and expense; for although a salary of 600 *pesos* in assayed silver was assigned me, there were no proceeds from fines from which to collect the same.

And I took with me to the defence of the said city and port

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-4-34, 16 *pliegos*, legalized copy.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the *Audiencia*, presently addressed as "your highness." This was usual. It will be recalled that the court's seal was considered to be his majesty in person, as the Host is God. The accepted conception of the court as partaking of, not merely representing, the majesty of the crown, gave rise to the peculiar forms of address which will be seen to have complicated the translation of this document.

<sup>3</sup> This active soldier of 1572 presently entered the monastic life. When he became a Franciscan friar he left in the world four children by a deceased wife, and when, in 1577, he desired to obtain favour for them, he presented at court the evidence of his services contained in this *información*, drawn up at an earlier date. A duplicate exists in 69-3-10, for Captain Berrio, frequently mentioned herein, presented these same depositions as sufficient evidence of his own participation in the events described.

of Nombre de Dios, Captain Hernando de Berrio with approximately 100 men, and other residents and good soldiers of this kingdom.

These being in the said city as garrison, there appeared off the port eight sails and three or four launches of English corsairs, and they were off the port and coast more than fifteen days. During that time I fortified the said city and all the sea-coast of the said port with trenches and earth-works, as was suitable, and I advised your royal *Audiencia*, in consequence of which Licentiate Diego de Vera, your president and governor, came down with 200 men. Seeing the good condition into which I had put the said city, he left the forces he brought as reinforcement for it, and returned to the royal *Audiencia*. During all this time I stood guard in person, and made all the sentry rounds, every night, at all hours, along all the works, in these matters labouring, as was my duty and obligation, in your royal service, like a good and loyal servant.

Further, seeing that the said corsairs had not landed, and on the sea were doing much damage by seizing coasting craft, I sent against them an armada of two frigates and shallops, under the command of Captain Francisco Ramirez de Guzman and Admiral Cristóbal García Salon. With more than a hundred men they patrolled all the coast and brought (f. 6 v.) in three frigates which the corsairs had looted and damaged. Similarly, I ordered Captain Hernando de Berrio out to the river called the Sardinilla, for it was understood that the said corsairs might endeavour to land there; and I took all other measures needful for the defence of the said city and coast, as I was under obligation to do in your royal service.

Further, the fleet under General Diego Flores de Valdés, knight of the order of Santiago, being in the city, in the year 1573, in the month of April, there reached the city news that the English and French corsairs and *cimarrones* had attacked and sacked a mule-train numbering more than a hundred animals carrying gold and silver belonging to your highness and to private individuals, to a value of more than 200,000 *pesos*. As soon as I heard this, in person I sallied forth on the road on foot, and with me went the said Captain Hernando



de Berrio and other residents and soldiers<sup>1</sup>. I proceeded to the place where the robbery occurred, which was two leagues from the city. We went into the bush and killed the captain of the French, named Captain Tutila, and others of the corsairs and two of the *cimarrones*, and captured another of the French corsairs, who said his name was Jacques Laurens. He was executed. And we took from the corsairs a great part of the booty they had stolen, i.e. a great quantity of gold bricks and gold and silver bars, among these being eleven large gold bricks belonging to your highness, duly delivered to your highness' treasurer, Miguel Ordoño, which were worth more than 6300 *pesos*. With the said force I pursued the corsairs until night came on, with storm and rain, and we broke them up and scattered them in such manner that they could not keep together; and so it became impossible to follow them further.

As soon as I returned to the city, this same night, I ordered fifty men out, in command of Captain Antonio Suarez de Medina, to occupy the pass to the sea; and I took all other measures possible, according to the lie of the land and the weather, all which was done with brevity and despatch; and I delivered the gold and silver over to its owners....

(f. 7) I ask and request your highness to receive the testimony I intend to present...and that the witnesses I may bring forward may be examined accordingly, I furnish this interrogatory....

In the city of Panama, on the twenty-second day of the month of April, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy four...(f. 7 r.)....

4. ...whether they know that in the year '69, the said Captain Diego Calderon came to this kingdom of Tierra Firme and to the city of Panama; and shortly thereafter the royal *Audiencia*, being informed of his person and quality, and having observed the necessity of despatching relief to the city of Nombre de Dios against English corsairs then off that

<sup>1</sup> "...some citizens made it an excuse to busy themselves more in stealing than in defending..." The crown, San Lorenzo, November 28, 1574, to the *Audiencia* of Panama, in *A. de I.* 109-1-1, 1, f. 21. An investigation followed.

coast, commissioned him *alcalde mayor* and captain-general of the said city of Nombre de Dios....

5. ...whether they know that, having been commissioned *alcalde mayor* and captain-general of the city of Nombre de Dios, he went thither from this city of Panama, taking with him Captain Hernando de Berrio with 100 soldiers and some citizens of this kingdom, for the defence of the said city, to serve under Captain Hernando de Berrio's flag, Diego Calderon being general in command of them and of the said city; and although towards his expenses a salary was assigned him of 600 *pesos* in assayed silver, the said General Diego Calderon did not receive it, because there were no proceeds from fines or other sources mentioned in the aforesaid royal provision, nor would the city pay him out of its local revenues; wherefore Diego Calderon served the said post and office without any pay, at his own cost and expense, spending his own money on poor soldiers....

6. ...whether they know that as soon as he arrived in the city of Nombre de Dios Diego Calderon had the whole city put into a condition to resist attack, fortified it, supplied all equipment needed, erected a fort on the headland by the sea, and along all the beach built trenches, and fascine earth-works, himself in person working on them. He ordered all the artillery in the city to be overhauled and put into good shape, and planted seven or eight pieces in the fort. In all which he served his majesty like a good and loyal servant, with all diligence and care....

7. ...whether they know that he, being resident in the said city of Nombre de Dios, and serving his majesty in the said post and office of captain-general and *alcalde mayor*, there appeared along the coast eight sail, French and English corsairs, on a course laid for the said city. These corsairs had done and were doing great damage at sea in seizing barks and frigates and ships, and had stolen a great sum in gold *pesos* from many persons and killed many of his majesty's vassals. Let them state what they know and what happened before his administration and after the said Captain-General Diego Calderon held the said post and office.

8. . . .whether they know that the eight French ships and four pinnaces, when they had arrived off the port of the city of Nombre de Dios, lay close before it for more than fifteen days, seeking to land there, against whom the city defended itself with what men and artillery it had. Diego Calderon informed the royal *Audiencia* at Panama, and to the relief came immediately Licentiate Diego de Vera, president and captain-general, governor of this kingdom, with soldiers and residents from the city of Panama. Having arrived in the city of Nombre de Dios with these troops, seeing in what good shape Diego Calderon has put it, he left part of these men and himself returned to the royal *Audiencia*, to the despatch of its business. . . .(f. 8)

9. . . .whether they know that, the city being so prepared for war, for fifteen days three pinnaces lay at anchor on either side of the harbour mouth, a little more than a shot from shore, the corsair ships standing out at sea, and tacking back and forth; during which time watch was kept, night and day. . . .Learning that the corsairs intended to land, Diego Calderon sent Captain Hernando de Berrio with fifty harquebusiers to the river called the Sardina, and he addressed both the townspeople and the soldiers, all assembled together, exhorting and encouraging them, that, with augmented valour, they might serve his majesty and defend their city, homes and families. . . .

10. . . .whether they know that, in addition to provisioning and preparing the city of Nombre de Dios for defence, when he observed that the said pinnaces and ships had disappeared and gone off toward the Chagre River, Diego Calderon ordered two frigates and certain shallops to be made ready, manned and provided with men, artillery and other requisite equipment, and sent against the said corsairs Captain Francisco Ramirez de Guzman, with Cristóbal García Salón as admiral, and more than 100 men; and they patrolled all the coast and brought into port three frigates which the corsairs had plundered and damaged, killing many of the persons on board of them. . . .

11. . . .whether they know that while his majesty's fleet

and armada were in the port of the city of Nombre de Dios, General Diego Flores de Valdés commanding, in the month of April of last year, 1573, on the 29th of the said month, about midday, there arrived news that French and English corsairs, joined with *cimarrones* from the mountains, had attacked two pack-trains of more than a hundred mules laden with gold and silver, at a point two leagues distant from the said city of Nombre de Dios. Forthwith Diego Calderon, *alcalde mayor*, on foot set out down the road, calling upon the townspeople and soldiers to follow him, a summons to that effect having been cried; in response to which Captain Hernando de Berrio accompanied him, with certain soldiers and townsmen, and with all speed they went to the place where the robbery had occurred. General Diego Calderon and with him the said Captain Hernando de Berrio, with most of the people they had, pursued the corsairs more than two leagues and killed the captain of the said French corsairs, who was called Tutila, as well as certain English corsairs and two *cimarrones*; and they continued the pursuit until night came on, which was most tempestuous with rain. . . .

12. . . .whether they know that this sally, which Diego Calderon made against the corsairs, was of very great profit and effect, because in it their captain and many of them were killed, they were dispersed and broken up, and nearly all the booty which they had stolen was recovered, being a very large sum in gold and plate, belonging to his majesty and to private persons, in accomplishing which the said Diego Calderon rendered signal service to his majesty. . . .

13. . . .whether they know that Diego Calderon, *alcalde mayor*, ordered to be collected and himself collected all the gold and silver which was recovered from the corsairs, and brought it with all care and custody to the city of Nombre de Dios, where their property was delivered to its owners; among which there were delivered to Miguel Ordoño, his majesty's treasurer, eleven gold bricks worth some 6300 *pesos*, which were shown to be part of his majesty's royal revenues from the province of Peru. . . .

14. . . .whether they know that forthwith, that same night,

upon arriving in the city of Nombre de Dios, on their return from the country and from defeating the enemy, General Diego Calderon ordered out Captain Antonio Suarez de Medina with fifty men to intercept the said corsairs on the way which it was understood they would take in the morning when they sought to re-embark, and this party patrolled the coast for three days with all diligence... (f. 8 v.)

15. ...whether they know that when he learned that the corsairs had attacked and stolen the bullion, Diego Calderon informed General Diego Flores de Valdés, knight of the Order of Santiago, and begged him to order out all his pinnaces manned from the armada to hold the river mouths by which these corsairs entered, and by which they must emerge, and so General Diego Flores de Valdés did, with all diligence and care....

16. ...whether they know that in these days near the city one of the French corsairs, who had straggled from his company, was made prisoner, who said his name was Jacques Lores; against whom legal proceedings were taken, and he was executed, in view of his own statements and evidence that he was one of those who attacked the pack-train on the road... (f. 9)

In the city of Panama, on the twenty-seventh day of the month of April in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy four... (f. 10 v.)... Diego Calderon... presented as witness Juan de Morales Rendon, resident in this city... (f. 11)

In reply to the eleventh question witness deposed... that, the fleet and armada which General Diego Flores de Valdés commanded being in the harbour of Nombre de Dios, and Diego Calderon being *alcalde mayor* and captain-general of the said city, one day in April in 1573 news arrived to the effect that at a place two leagues from the city of Nombre de Dios, at the river called Campos, French and English corsairs together with a lot of *cimarrones* had attacked two pack-trains of more than seventy mules which were coming in laden with gold and silver. Immediately, on foot, Diego Calderon appeared in the market-place of the said city

and there ordered a summons to be cried, calling upon all the residents, transients and other inhabitants to proceed together to the relief of the bullion, on penalty of death to him who refused to go. Many persons assembled, from whom Diego Calderon selected Captain Hernando de Berrio with some twenty or thirty men, deponent being one of them. With this party Diego Calderon set out down the road on foot, calling upon the many people, who followed him, and they went with all speed to the place where the robbery had occurred. There they found the pack-trains in disorder and many boxes broken open, and a Frenchman (his head cut off) and a *cimarron* dead. The said *alcalde mayor* remained here with certain men and by his order Captain Berrio with about fifteen men pursued the English until night came on, very stormy, with rain and bad weather. Witness knows this, because he saw it, being himself present, and it is public and notorious.

12. In reply to the twelfth question witness deposes that he knows that in this sally and enterprise Diego Calderon rendered his majesty signal service, because the said English captain was killed, and another Englishman, and also because the corsairs were dispersed and nearly all the loot they had stolen was recovered. Witness believes about 100,000 *pesos* were recovered, which belonged to private individuals and principally to his majesty. This was accomplished because Diego Calderon came forth so promptly, for the moment the news arrived he set out with the rest of the people. . . . (f. 11 r.)

. . . In the city of Panama, on the twenty-eighth day of the month of April of the aforesaid year. Diego Calderon . . . presented as witness Alonso de Ribera, notary of the city of Nombre de Dios. . . . (f. 13) . . . .

11. In reply to the eleventh question witness deposed that while General Diego Flores de Valdés was in the city of Nombre de Dios and his armada and fleet in its harbour, one day in the month of April in the year 1573 . . . about mid-day news came that French and English corsairs and *cimarrones* from the highlands had held up two mule-trains laden with gold and silver at a point two leagues from the city of Nombre de Dios; and witness saw that as soon as the news came,

immediately, General Diego Calderon set out....Because deponent was ill he remained (in the city)....Night fell; deponent observed that therefore, and because it rained heavily, some persons returned and in the market-place of Nombre de Dios deponent saw a head exposed which they said was that of Captain Tutila, and so also he saw the head of a negro which they said was that of a *cimarron*.... (f. 13 r.)

14. In reply to the fourteenth question deponent said that forthwith, the night that they returned from the bush where the robbery occurred, he knows that next day early Antonio Suarez de Medina went out with a body of soldiers, well armed and equipped, to cut off the corsairs' retreat where it was deduced that they would come down to the shore to embark. The said Antonio de Medina and Juan Rodriguez, surgeon, who went out on this undertaking, told deponent that they marched three or four days with all diligence and care, and when they arrived at the place where they supposed the corsairs would re-embark, they had already done so....

This same day, month and year, the said Diego Calderon... presented as witness Martin de Hureta, resident in this city....

...In reply to the eleventh question he stated that...as soon as the news arrived Diego Calderon set out on foot... with many soldiers and residents of the city of Nombre de Dios, deponent among them....They arrived where the robbery had occurred and found the mules of the pack-trains unpacked and scattered, and many boxes and cases of plate broken open. They killed the captain of the corsairs and another of the band and two *cimarrones*, and went in pursuit of them until nightfall. The night was very dark and rainy and tempestuous....

(f. 17) In the city of Panama on the thirty-first (*sic*) day of the month of April of the said year, the said Diego Calderon... as witness presented Luis de los Rios, resident in this city of Panama....(f. 18)

...In reply to the eleventh question deponent stated that...(f. 18 r.) Captain Diego Calderon...immediately

went out from that city and in his company went Captain Hernando de Berrio and many soldiers and persons from that city; and when they reached the place where the robbery had occurred they found a French captain, whom they killed, along with one or two *cimarrones*. . . (f. 22)

In the city of Panama on the sixth day of the month of May in the said year, Diego Calderon . . . as witness presented Luis de Çarate, resident in this city. . .

11. In reply to the eleventh question deponent said that . . . the instant the news arrived Captain Diego Calderon with great diligence and speed appeared in the city market-place, summoning the people to follow him, for they were going to the place where the corsairs had committed (f. 22 r.) the robbery. By crier he bade all to follow him and so set out; and with him went Captain Hernando de Berrio and deponent and many other persons. With much difficulty, because it was a very muddy bad road, they all proceeded to the place where the robbery had occurred, and Diego Calderon arrived before deponent, for he mounted a mule he met on the way, that he might go more quickly to the relief. Diego Calderon went into the bush with the men who accompanied him, and when deponent reached the place of the robbery he found an Englishman, or a Frenchman, dead and decapitated, and a *cimarron*, dead. While searching for gold and silver, of the lot they had stolen, deponent came upon the mules of the pack-train, in disorder, and at this juncture he saw Diego Calderon emerge from the bush, tired and exhausted. . .

Deponent knew and certainly understood that the dead Englishman or Frenchman was a very valiant captain whom Diego Calderon and the men with him encountered. . . Further, witness learned that when Diego Calderon went into the bush he killed a Frenchman, who they said was the captain of the corsairs. . . (f. 24)

In the city of Panama on the seventh day of the month of May in the said year, Diego Calderon . . . as witness presented (f. 24 r.) Pero Lopez, carpenter, resident of this city. . . (f. 25 r.)

11. In reply to the eleventh question he said that . . . at the



time mentioned in the question...news reached the city about noon that two leagues out English and French corsairs and *cimarrones* had attacked and robbed many mules of a pack-train....Immediately Diego Calderon set out...and this witness also went with him to the place where the robbery occurred. All went on foot, which was hard work, because of the bad road. When, at top speed, they arrived there they found the mules unpacked and in disorder and many cases and boxes broken open and much silver and gold scattered about. When deponent came up a Frenchman and a *cimarron* were dead. Hernando de Berrio with twenty-five men went into the bush after the corsairs, whom they had broken up and scattered when they arrived. Deponent knew and understood that in the bush the said soldiers killed the captain of the French who was called Tutila. And so Diego Calderon ordered the people with him to gather up and search for the gold and silver which had been recovered from the corsairs...(f. 26 r.)

In the city of Panama on the eleventh day of the month of May in the said year,...Diego Calderon...as witness presented Pero García de Nuño Alvarez, resident in this city... (f. 26 r.)....

11. In reply to the eleventh question he said that...he observed that news reached the city that certain squadrons and a company of English and French corsairs and *cimarrones* from the mountains had held up two trains of 100 mules.... Forthwith Diego Calderon set out by the highway on foot, calling upon the people and soldiers to follow him, (f. 28) deponent among them. They went with all possible haste to the place where the robbery had occurred, and deponent with other soldiers under Captain Berrio went ahead of General Diego Calderon, who was getting the people together.

They went two leagues into the wilderness in pursuit of the French and found that the corsairs were fleeing and dropping the gold and silver they had stolen and abandoning their arms. And as they were advancing, they came upon the captain called Tutila, who was the leader of the corsairs, and they killed him.

So they gathered up the money and followed after the enemies until night fell. It was a stormy rainy night. Because this prevented them from carrying the necessary subsistence and munitions, they returned to the city of Nombre de Dios.

When deponent and the other people arrived at the scene of the robbery, they found the pack-mules scattered and many cases and boxes broken open, which had contained bullion to a great amount.

They also found a negro and a Frenchman dead; and the *alcalde mayor* ordered all the gold and silver to be collected which had been recovered from the corsairs. . . .

This sally in relief . . . prevented the corsairs and *cimarrones* from carrying off all the bullion, and dispersed them. . . .

## Document No. 32<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown,  
Panama, September 22, 1574.]

(f. 204)

+

### *Catholic Royal Majesty . . .*

(f. 204 r.) . . . The galleons having left Nombre de Dios, in the direction of Veragua there appeared one morning an English corsair calling himself John Noble, who had been in that vicinity when the last fleet was here. He pillaged certain barks and frigates of the coastwise trade and began to disturb this realm. God granted that by means of the measures taken both at Nombre de Dios and also at Veragua he should be captured with all his men, twenty-eight in all<sup>2</sup>. They were all killed, excepting two boys who were condemned to the galleys for life and are now serving in your majesty's galleons. The captain and two of them were hanged at Nombre de Dios, which has occasioned great joy and animated all, and the realm is entirely quiet.

. . . Panama. September 22, 1574.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servant who kisses your majesty's royal hands and feet.

*The Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda (Rubric).*

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-21, Panama 11, 1 pliego, original.

<sup>2</sup> According to Document No. 33, these happenings occurred in June, 1574, or thereabouts.

## Document No. 33<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro Godinez Osorio<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Veragua, April 3, 1575.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty...*

(p. 2) ... This year two Englishmen and a Frenchman have been here.

The first Englishman came in June of last year to an island called El Escudo, without touching on the Mainland coast. This island is twelve leagues from this port and lies in the route of all vessels bound to this city. I heard he was there from a bark which escaped from him, fleeing, which he was unable to take with a launch. Immediately I sent word to Nombre de Dios and manned a rowing frigate with thirty harquebusiers, and sent it out to discover this ship's identity and her strength, with orders to take her if they found her weak and, if they found her strong, to return without attacking.

This frigate came up with her and fired four or five shots at her. Forthwith, the men on board crowded into a launch and abandoned the ship (with four heavy pieces and four falcons), and put in toward this port.

I went out to meet them with a brigantine and a launch and pursued them in such fashion that I took two men alive, whom I hanged, sent four to the bottom, and forced the rest to run ashore near Chagre. The brigantine from Nombre de Dios, which had come out on receipt of the news, came up and captured these and eight more, their comrades, and these, too, were hanged.

After this, on December 14, (p. 3) arrived a French ship carrying 120 harquebusiers, and a good armament of twenty pieces of brass artillery... 3.

This ship's pilot is one Luis Marquez, Portuguese, citizen

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-39, Panama 29, 2½ pliegos, original.

<sup>2</sup> His Catholic majesty's governor at Veragua.

<sup>3</sup> Having disposed of this less manageable larger vessel, it was with two frigates, which they had taken from Spaniards, that the French attacked Veragua on December 16, according to omitted portions of this document.

of Coimbra<sup>1</sup>, who was here some time (more than six years ago) and knows all this coast well....

Being frustrated (they entered into the town' but they did not leave with comestibles nor (p. 5) with wine, although there was plenty here), they decided to depart and go, one [frigate] to El Desaguadero and the other to Chagre....

Luis Marquez was at El Desaguadero, lying in wait for the Nicaragua frigates, belonging to certain residents who had gone there for negroes, which the Frenchman knew were expected... (p. 6).... This pilot was in El Desaguadero three months. He took three barks. I do not know what he did with the persons on board. I suppose he killed them, because these are Lutherans and very bad people.

From there these two frigates, re-joining, came here and one night, March 15, landed forty harquebusiers to attack this town at dawn, intending the frigates to come up at the same time. They ran upon a sentry I had out in that direction, for I was afraid for that approach, although it is difficult; and he fired a small culverin which he had there, for signalling. They came along the beach, firing their harquebuses until they reached the town, which was on the alert because the sail had been sighted the day before. We sallied and although they made haste to re-embark I believe a great many were wounded, because our men fired heavily upon them with their harquebuses. The frigates came up to the bar and from there bombarded all day, and they killed a man at the bar....

Certainly this province is much vexed by corsairs. They never leave these ports, because only from here do the frigates get gold.... (p. 7)

...Veragua. April 3, 1575.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servant who kisses your majesty's feet and hands.

*Pedro Godínez Osorio* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> In the original, *Çecinbra*. Coimbra or Cintra?

## Document No. 34<sup>1</sup>

Don Diego de Herrera<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, Puerto de Caballos,  
April 4, 1575.]

c)

+

*Catholic Royal Majesty...*

3) ...To such a point has the shamelessness of certain  
lish who sacked Veragua attained, that, with their Portu-  
se pilot, they ascended the Desaguadero de Nicaragua  
ttempt to sack Granada in that province, and they would  
e carried out their intention (so unapprehensive were the  
ple there, for this was a thing which seemed impossible),  
they not, quite near there, happened upon certain frigates  
ing down with gangs of negroes which certain citizens of  
ncho were taking to Veragua. Though the people and the  
roes escaped, the English took what they had, and so the  
was spared. We suppose that, having dared to go there,  
r will venture to come here, where they will not find much  
nce... (p. 4)....

..Puerto de Caballos, April 4, 1575.

Catholic Royal Majesty

our majesty's servant and vassal, who kisses your majesty's  
r royal hands.

*Don Diego de Herrera* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-39 (62), Guatemala 39, 1½ pliegos, original.

<sup>2</sup> Governor of Honduras.

## Document No. 35<sup>1</sup>

[Captain Diego Lopez<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Trujillo, May 20, 1575.]

(p. 1)

+

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...I have now to inform your royal majesty that on Saturday, at midnight, eve of the Resurrection, which was the 3rd of April this present year of 1575, an English captain arrived at this port with a launch (oars and sail), having left his ship hidden three leagues from this city at Honduras Point<sup>3</sup>. Our Lord granted that he should be perceived by the sentinel I had set, who immediately called this city to arms, and its citizens assembled to the defence. When the enemy realized that he was discovered, (p. 2) he did not dare to land or assault this city, as was his design. I fired upon him with a piece of artillery and he withdrew at once from the coast.

There was a frigate anchored in the harbour, which he attacked and took, cutting her cables. We were unable to prevent this, for there was no ship available, nor could we abandon the fort of the city; further, the enemy had not been reconnoitred, his strength was not known, nor were the necessary means available, because of our great present need and poverty, wherewith to attack him, although our will was and is good against all danger, in your majesty's royal service.

When day came, we saw the enemy on the high sea making straight for Puerto de Caballos<sup>4</sup>, whither warning was forthwith sent by a shallop<sup>5</sup>. Comprehending our intention, the

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-39, Guatemala 39, 1 *pliego*, original, duplicated. At the time that he wrote this despatch to the crown, Captain Lopez prepared another in almost identical terms, for Licentiate don Juan de Ovando, president of the Council for Indies, which is preserved in the same *legajo*.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant under Governor Herrera.

<sup>3</sup> Cape Honduras.

<sup>4</sup> "To pillage the port and the ships which were there." The despatch above-cited, to Ovando.

<sup>5</sup> "...a shallop was despatched to warn the governor." *Ibid.*

English corsair outsailed her, and twenty leagues from port took the despatch-boat, which was compelled to surrender to him<sup>1</sup>.

Next, the same day in the afternoon, he took another vessel, belonging to Juan Antonio, bound to this port from that of Caballos, aboard which he got more than 3000 ducats in gold and silver and other things<sup>2</sup>.

He wounded the despatch-bearer thrice<sup>3</sup>. He cruelly tortured other persons, one, in demand of money, and another, to learn the situation ashore and sailing directions.

At this juncture with his ship<sup>4</sup> and a launch the Englishman attacked the ships<sup>5</sup> bound from Puerto de Caballos to this harbour, on the way to those realms, half way here, off El Triunfo de la Cruz. He found them strong. Artillery fire was exchanged and the enemy withdrew. He got the wind of them and came to this bay by night<sup>6</sup>.

He did not venture to anchor or come up to our fort, and so took his departure, for we had not the means with which to attack him. He withdrew towards Cape Cameron.

From two prisoners<sup>7</sup> he took from the despatch-boat, who escaped by swimming to this coast, it was learned that they carried twenty-two firearms, seven pieces of artillery, many arrows, fireworks, pikes and other weapons for war. They have a chart of this land. They carry a Portuguese pilot, a man not known here.

<sup>1</sup> The text of the Ovando despatch makes this translation acceptable: "*sin poder hazer otra cosa.*"

<sup>2</sup> The "final prize"? Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> "...they wounded the messenger with two arrow-wounds...." The above-cited despatch to Ovando.

<sup>4</sup> "...The Englishman was a fast vessel, medium size...." *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> "...which are Martin Monte and Vicencio Garullo...." *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> "The return which the enemy made... was Tuesday in the night, April 5; he kept clear of our artillery, and so doubled the point and went to Point Cameron, which is to the east of this city...." *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> "...took two prisoners who later, when he anchored on this coast above the city, twenty leagues to eastward, escaped from him by swimming, from whom it was learned how many they were and what armament they carried, and they are as many as 32 English in the *zabra* and launch. They carry 22 harquebuses, and seven pieces of artillery, large and small; an immense supply of arrows, much war material, and all in very good order. They charted the whole of this coast from Point Manavique to Golfo Dulce...." *Ibid.*



The prisoners say the Englishman told them they would return another year with greater force.

This city has felt these robberies keenly, and is cast down because it lacked means to offend any enemy.

In Veragua, whence these corsairs came, they killed<sup>1</sup> brave men, and one citizen was ransomed for 3000 pesos—I have received news to this effect.

They have committed great robberies and insults. They are Lutherans.

As your majesty's humblest servant and loyal vassal, since your majesty has ordered me to serve in this port and to guard and defend it, I humbly entreat your majesty to order me to be provided with the means, and forces for the task...<sup>2</sup>. (p. 3) This miserable city...so afflicted, and frequently attacked by enemies, is now without resources, and what is accomplished, is done by main strength...We are on the watch and alert, lest we fall into such death and ruin as Veragua...<sup>3</sup>.

...Truxillo, May 20, 1575.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servant kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Captain Diego Lopez (Rubric)...*

<sup>1</sup> "In Veragua these English and others killed many people, cutting their throats. The same is feared here..." The despatch to Ovando.

<sup>2</sup> "...the residents of this city will abandon it and go into the interior, unless there is force..." *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> He asks that certain funds already appropriated for his relief be made effective; that artillery, ordered sent to him, be delivered, etc. A decree on p. 4 of the document thanks him for his services, urges him to be on guard, and shows that *sobre-cédulas* were to be sent to the president of the *Audiencia* of Guatemala concerning the money and to authorities at Seville concerning the artillery.

## Document No. 36<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro Godinez Osorio to the Crown,  
Veragua, March 22, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

... (p. 2)<sup>2</sup> ... Corsairs have been more numerous this year<sup>3</sup> than in any since I came to the Indies. Five have appeared off this port, the least formidable with eighty men. Three came here without touching on the Main, in order to give no warning. Two arrived at dawn, with fair weather and moon, but could do no damage. On the contrary, a heavy cannon-ball was dropped aboard one frigate; and they threw two men overboard.

The first corsair who came brought eighty Englishmen in two small vessels. A frigate of the armada encountered him and got the wind. When he was on the point of surrender, the best of his men killed, he worked to windward and escaped, toward Chagre, where he put off a launch and took 10,000 *pesos* from two barks, and another Veragua bark with 4000 *pesos* in gold.

He came down on this port, but since our artillery fire prevented him from anchoring, he proceeded to El Escudo. The galleons (p. 3) went out after him, but did not proceed beyond here, because the weather was not propitious, although they knew he was at El Escudo.

From there a man whom the English had held prisoner came and informed me that, from an Englishman who had desired to accompany him, he had learned that in the bay at Acla this corsair had left a ship laden with cloth, in charge of

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 2½ *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> In omitted portions of this letter the governor states more gold is being obtained from the mines because more negroes are at work; the settlement is growing; he maintains a lookout, to warn against enemies approaching; and has established certain defences, including a battery of four pieces of artillery.

<sup>3</sup> "...this past year of '76...."

a boy and two men; and that off Vista de Agua there were two ships and 200 men, with wines and linens, for the negroes. Instantly I wrote this to the *Audiencia*, for at the moment I had neither men nor a frigate to arm to send for the ship. They sent out<sup>1</sup> a brigantine with twenty men and brought in the merchandise and frigates they found there. And they found only the guard the Englishman had said was there.

Evidently they did not search diligently for the two ships, for a frigate put in here and told me that in that neighbourhood two ships had chased him; and this incident of the Englishman and the two ships was in September. I never heard anything further about any of them. I wrote this immediately to the *Audiencia*, and that it was understood they purposed to cross to the Pacific—and now, at last, they have made their appearance there...<sup>2</sup>. (p. 8)

...Concepción [de Veragua], March 22, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's faithful servant who kisses your majesty's feet and hands.

*Pedro Godínez Osorio* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 1-6-3/26, 7, 2, *Patronato* 152, original commission to Luis de Torres Guerrero, dated August 3, 1576.

<sup>2</sup> In omitted paragraphs the governor recounts the visit of a pirate whom he calls "Pedro de la Cruz, a Biscayan, a soldier who knows this country and its seas thoroughly...." This man stationed himself off El Escudo and in effect laid a "hunger siege" to Veragua in that he captured its supplies. The governor appealed to the *Audiencia*, which sent out two frigates and a brigantine; these, however, did not dare attack him (the governor says) when they found him at Chagre, whither he had retired upon seeing that the governor himself was preparing to take the offensive. Cf. p. 157 *post*.

There is bitter complaint through all these documents concerning the inefficiency of punitive expeditions as a rule, and of the ineffectiveness of galleons (i.e. large craft) as against the pirates' smaller vessels.

# Document No. 37

["Papers of Captain Francisco de Acles, Englishman"  
(John Barker), 1577.]

[Sheet 1]

The true and iuste note of all the goeld Juelles  
Plate & Querenta<sup>2</sup> silu<sup>er</sup> sharredd emongest the whole  
Companye by Charellles Jones, Edwarde Lorde, Thomas  
Clerke, Antony Tompson and John Pawle.

## Golde in Juelles

	Imp <sup>r</sup> imis 1 manilia <sup>3</sup> of Golde enamiled ...	wainge	ownces		
	Item 5 small manilias of golde ...		7 ... $\frac{1}{4}$		
	Item 10 dubble Pistolletes				
Gold barred.	Item barred golde	wayinge	li	ounces	drams
	Item a Chayne of gold		2 ...	3 ... $\frac{1}{4}$ ...	0
	Item a Tablett of golde				
	Item a Tothepike in golde				
	Item Ringes of gold & buttons six				
	Item sortillias <sup>4</sup> of gold & Perle ...		0 ...	$\frac{3}{4}$ ... 0 ...	3
	Item in Perelles orient and not orient ...		0 ...	0 ... 0 ...	3
	Item Christall buttones ...		7		
	Item in gold wrowghte for braslettes ...			0 ... 0 ...	2 di <sup>5</sup>
In reales of Plate)	Item in Realles of Plate ...		li		
	Item in Realles of Plate ...		1 ...	2 ... $\frac{1}{4}$ ... 0 ...	0
Querant <sup>2</sup> siluer)	Item in Silu <sup>er</sup> Querrent <sup>2</sup> the summ of ...		45 ...	13 ... $\frac{3}{4}$ ... 0 ...	0
Wroughte Plate)	Item in wroughte Platte wainge ...		24 ...	1 ... 0 ... 0 ...	0
	Summ of the gold ...			ownces	
				43	
	Summ of the silu <sup>er</sup> ...			1138 [sic]	
				1138	
	Soe there remayneth in the sharrer[?]'s				
	hands vnshared ...				
	The whole ... 1568				

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 54-1-12, Santo Domingo 96. A few loose sheets of paper, written in English, so labelled (in Spanish) on the reverse of sheet 2. For their transcription (from photo copies of the originals) I am indebted to Mr A. J. Watson of the Manuscripts Department of the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> *Corriente?* Current.

<sup>3</sup> Bracelet?

<sup>4</sup> Rings, finger- or ear-

<sup>5</sup> Di =  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

[Sheet 1 r.]

Shared emongest the Companie }  
 as folowith in seuerall parcelles } in gold

	ounces	
The Captayne in Goeld ... ..	7 ...	} 4 1/2
Mr Coxe in gold enamyled ... ..	6 ...	
Mr Roche in barred gold & other ... ..	5 ...	
Antonie Tompsonn in gold ... ..	4 ...	
Charelles Jones in gold chayne ... ..	3 ...	} 4 1/2
Will <sup>m</sup> Smythe in golde ... ..	3 ...	
Edwarde Gardener ... ..	2 ...	
Edwarde lorde ... ..	3 ...	
Thomas Smythe ... ..	2 ...	} 1 1/2 ... 2 drams
Thomas Davys ... ..	3 ...	
Summ <sup>a</sup>	43 ...	1 1/2 ... 2 drams

Syluer shared emongest the Companie  
 folowinge

	ounces	
Mr Browne ... ..	59	
Will <sup>m</sup> Whitte ... ..	45	
Thomas Clerk ... ..	36	
Thomas Sample ... ..	36	
Robert Jacson ... ..	36	
John Powell ... ..	36	
John Manfild ... ..	36	
Mychaell the s <sup>r</sup> geon ... ..	37 ... 1/2	
Richarde hoskyns ... ..	27	
Richarde blake ... ..	27	
John Reape ... ..	27	
ffrauncis Caloy ... ..	27	
Raphe Carre ... ..	27	
Phillip the ffrenchma <sup>n</sup> ... ..	27	
John Moone ... ..	27	
John Shute ... ..	27	
George Parker ... ..	27	
John Cosen ... ..	18	
John the ffrenchman ... ..	27	
Dyrryck ... ..	27	
Andreas ... ..	27	
Helliogabrande ... ..	27	
John Davys ... ..	18	
Bonaventure ... ..	18	
Harry the Cooke ... ..	18	
Will <sup>m</sup> Gwyll <sup>m</sup> ... ..	20 ... 1/2	
Thomas Tunnell ... ..	20 ... 1/2	
Phillip the welshman ... ..	18	
John Parker ... ..	27	

Summa 827}

371  
 456  
 827

[Sheet 2]

Jerman Wyborne	...	...	36
John Wylde	...	...	18
Thomas Wotton	...	...	32
Thomas Powell	...	...	18
Will <sup>m</sup> Collier	...	...	27
Ames	...	...	18
Richarde of bristowe	...	...	22
John Austen	...	...	18
Thomas ffreman	...	...	09
Thomas Nightingale	...	...	13
Lawryna	...	...	13
Thomas Carpenter	...	...	13
Jack the boye	...	...	4
Morrys the boye	...	...	4

Summa 248}

Summa totalis 1075}

1505 [*sic*]

[Sheet 3]

The masters	The Captayne	...	...	8
	M <sup>r</sup> Coxo	...	...	7
M <sup>r</sup> guners	M <sup>r</sup> Roche	...	...	6 ... $\frac{2}{4}$
	M <sup>r</sup> Browne	...	...	6
Quarter masters	Will <sup>m</sup> Whitte	...	...	5
	Antonie Tompsonn	...	...	5
	Charelles Jones	...	...	4
	Thomas Clerk	...	...	4
	Edwarde Lorde	...	...	4
	Will <sup>m</sup> Smythe	...	...	4
	Thomas Sample	...	...	4
The boteswaynes	Roberte Jacson	...	...	4
	John Powell	...	...	4
The S <sup>r</sup> geons	John Manfild	...	...	4
	Mychaell	...	...	4 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
Sayllers	Richarde Hoskyns	...	...	3
	Richard Blake	...	...	3
	John Reape	...	...	3
	ffrauncis Caloy	...	...	3
	Raphe Carre	...	...	3
	Phillippe the ffrencheman	...	...	3
	John Moone	...	...	3
	John Shute	...	...	3
	George Parker	...	...	3
	John Cosen	...	...	2
	John The ffrencheman	...	...	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
	Dyrryck	...	...	3
	Andreas The dutchman	...	...	3
	Helliogabrande	...	...	3
	Edwarde Gardener	...	...	3
	John Davys	...	...	2

The Cookes	Bonaventure Burgis	...	...	2
	Harrye The Cooke	...	...	2
	Will <sup>m</sup> Gwyll <sup>m</sup>	...	...	2 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Thomas Tunnell	...	...	2 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Phillipp the welsheman	...	...	2
	John Parker	...	...	3

[Sheet 3 r.]

Soldiers	Jerman Wyborne	...	...	4
	John Wilde	...	...	2
	Thomas Smythe	...	...	3
	Thomas Wotton	...	...	3 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Thomas Powell	...	...	2
	Will <sup>m</sup> Collier	...	...	3
	Ames	...	...	2
	Richard of bristowe	...	...	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
	John Austen	...	...	2
	Thomas fireman	...	...	1
	Thomas Nyghtingale	...	...	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Lawryna	...	...	1 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Thomas Carpenter	...	...	1 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Thomas Davys	...	...	4
Boyes	Jack the boye	...	...	0 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
	Morrys the boye	...	...	0 ... $\frac{1}{4}$

Summe 167}

Shares allotted for Certayne of  
the Companie departed there  
Liefes

Alexander Woore  
Will<sup>m</sup> Somers  
Thomas bell  
James the Cor[ni]she-  
man

The whole number of mens }  
shares lyvinge & departed } amounteth

[Sheet 4]

Thomas fireman	...	...	1	} 1 ... $\frac{1}{4}$
John Manfild	...	...	1	
Jacsonn	...	...	1	
Bonaventure	...	...	2	
Thomas Nyghtingale	...	...	1	
Thomas Smyth	...	...	3	
Jack the boye	...	...		

[Sheet 5]

					sh.	pence	ounces
Cheste sharinge	Mr Coxe	...	...	...	8	...	12 ... 2
	Mr Roche	...	...	7 ...	3	...	$\frac{3}{4}$
	Wm	...	...	2			
	Walther	...	...	1			
	Morrys	...	...	di			
	Thomas Tunnell	...	...	2			
	Willm Whitte	...	...	5 ...	3	...	$1\frac{1}{4}$
	Pawell	...	...	4 ...			
	Harry	...	...	2 ...			
$\frac{2}{4}$ [...] quarter	Jermann Wyborne	...	...	4	2	...	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Mr Coxe	Mychaell	...	...	4			
[...] ounces	Lawryna	...	...	1			
	John Austen	...	...	2	4	...	$\frac{2}{4}$
	Wm Collier	...	...	3			
	Thomas Clerk	...	...	4			
	Willm Davys	...	...	3			
	George Parker	...	...	3			
	John Mone	...	...	3	4	...	$1\frac{2}{4}$
	John Parker	...	...	2			
	Tho: Sample	...	...	2			
	John Shute	...	...	2			
	John Cosen	...	...	2			
	Dyrrycke	...	...	2			
	John The frenchman	...	...	2			
	Helliogabrande	...	...	2			
	Ames	...	...	2			
	Richarde of bristowe	...	...	2			
	Thomas freman	...	...	1			
				42	1	...	$\frac{1}{4}$
	Mr Browne	...	...	7 ...			
	Andrewe barker	...	...	4	3	...	ounces
	John Wilde	...	...	2 ...			
	Thomas Wotton	...	...	2 ...			
	Thomas Carpenter	...	...	2			
	Raphe Carre	...	...	2	19	...	$\frac{1}{4}$
	Bonaventure	...	...	2			
	Richarde Blake	...	...	2 ...	3	...	ounces
	Richarde Hoskyns	...	...	2 ...			
	John Reape	...	...	2 ...			
	Jack the boye	...	...	$\frac{2}{4}$			
	ffrauncis the french:	...	...	2 ...	2	...	$\frac{2}{4}$
	Phillippe The	...	...	2			
	Thomas Nightingalle	...	...	1			
	John Manfyld	...	...	1			
	Jacson	...	...	1			

<sup>1</sup> So checked in original.



[Sheet 5 r.]

[ounces]

I	Phillippe the Welshman	2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
$\frac{2}{4}$ ... $\frac{1}{4}$	Thomas Powell	... 2	
<hr/>			
	Edwarde lord C	... 4	} 2 ounces
	Charelles Jones C	... 4	
<hr/>			
†	Antony Tompsonn	... 4	} 3 ounces
	Andreas	... 2	
	Thomas Smyth	... 3	
	Thomas Davys	... 3	

[Sheet 6 as corrected]

†	The Captayne	... 8	
†	Mr Cox	... 7	
†	Mr Roche	... 7	
†	Mr Browne	... 6 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	Will <sup>m</sup> Whitte	... 5	
	Antonie Tompson	... 5	
	Charelles Jones	... 4	
†	Thomas Clerk	... 4	
	Edwarde lorde	... 4	
†	Will <sup>m</sup> Smythe	... 3	
†	Thomas Sample	... 2	
†	Robarte Jacsonn	... 1	
†	John Pawle	... 4	
†	John Manfild	... 1 ... $\frac{2}{4}$ [? deleted]	
†	Mychaell	... 4	
†	Richarde hoskyns	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	Rycharde Blake	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	John Reape	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	ffrannccys Caloy	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	Raphe Carre	... 2	
†	Phillip levoroy	... 2	
†	John Mone	... 3	
†	Phillip the welshman	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	John Parker	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	John Shute	... 2	
†	George Parker	... 3	
†	John Cosen	... 2	
†	John The frenchman	... 2	
†	Dyrryck	... 2	
	Andreas	... 2	
†	Helliogabrande	... 2	
†	Will <sup>m</sup> Gwyll <sup>m</sup>	... 2	
†	Thomas Tunnell	... 2	
†	Bonaventure burgis	... 2	
†	Harry the Cook	... 2	
†	Walther	... 1	
†	Jerman Wyborne	... 4	
†	John wilde	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
	Thomas Smyth	... 3	
†	Thomas Wotton	... 2 ... $\frac{2}{4}$	
†	Thomas Powell	... 2	
†	Will <sup>m</sup> Collier	... 3	

†Ames	...	...	...	...	2	
†Rycharde of bristowe	...	...	...	...	2	
†John Augusteen	...	...	...	...	2	
†Thomas ffreeman	...	...	...	...	1	
†Thomas [N]yghtingale	...	...	...	...	1	
†Lawryna	...	...	...	...	1	
Thomas Davys	...	...	...	...	3	
†Thomas Carpenter	...	...	...	...	2	
†Jacke	} The	...	...	...	0 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
†Morrys		boyes	...	...	0 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Alexander Wooe	...	...	...	...	1	
Will <sup>m</sup> Somers	...	...	...	...	0 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Thomas Bell	...	...	...	...	0 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
James the Cornisheman	...	...	...	...	0 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Thomas Warrald	...	...	...	...	1 ...	0
Edwarde Gardner	...	...	...	...	1 ...	0
John Davys	...	...	...	...	1 ...	0

[Sheet 6 r.]

Charelles	...	...	...	...	3 <sup>s</sup>	
W <sup>m</sup> Smyth	...	...	...	...	1	
Richarde blake	...	...	...	...	6 <sup>d</sup>	
John Reape	...	...	...	...	10 <sup>d</sup>	
John ffrenchmann	...	...	2 <sup>s</sup>	...	8 <sup>d</sup>	
Phillip ffrenchmann	...	...	...	...	12 <sup>d</sup>	
Richard hoskyns	...	...	...	...	10 <sup>s</sup>	
Raphe	...	...	...	...	3 <sup>s</sup>	
Ames	...	...	...	...	36 <sup>s</sup>	
Thomas Smyth	...	...	...	...	8 <sup>s</sup>	
Richarde of bristowe	...	...	...	...	3 <sup>s</sup>	
John Wilde	...	...	...	...	2 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Tho: Wotton	...	...	...	...	2 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Thomas Carpenter	...	...	...	...	2	
Raphe [deleted]	...	...	...	...		
Bonaventure	...	...	...	...	2	
John Reape	...	...	...	...	2 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
ffrauncis	...	...	...	...	2 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$
Phillippe	...	...	...	...	2	
Thomas Nyghtingale	...	...	...	...	1	
John Manfild	...	...	...	...	1	
Jacsonn	...	...	...	...	1	
Jac the boye	...	...	...	...	$\frac{2}{4}$	
					16 ...	$\frac{2}{4}$

† There is no explanation of the marking of the named here preceded by a dagger.

## Document No. 38<sup>1</sup>

[The City of Panama to the Crown, April 15, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

In the past years of 1573 and 1575 by our procurator we sent report to your majesty on the calamity and misfortune which had befallen this kingdom, setting forth the want and continuous unrest in which it is kept by French and English, infidels and Lutherans, allied with the *cimarrones*, and describing how with their aid they had occasioned many deaths and committed robberies.

At Venta Chagre, five leagues from this city, they killed two friars and three or four travellers and soldiers; and at Campos River, a league from the city of Nombre de Dios, working in company with the *cimarrones*, they attacked certain pack-trains, from which it was found that they had stolen and carried off more than 130,000 *pesos* in gold belonging to your majesty and private persons, and would have carried off more than another 100,000 had not help gone out very speedily from Nombre de Dios.

With which booty they departed, no measures being taken to prevent it, neither by land nor by sea, Diego Flores de Valdés being in the harbour of the said city with your majesty's armada.

For the remedy and relief of this situation, and protection of the Chagre River barks, and that the cities of Nombre de Dios and Veragua might receive subsistence, without which population cannot be maintained in them, since they grow no crops of their own and must be supplied by sea, we entreated your majesty to send galleys to protect the coast, both by sea and land, to the end that traffic and commerce in merchandise might not cease; we asked that the galleons be discontinued, for they have been ineffective from the time your majesty

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original.

ordered them here. We entreated your majesty to the end, also, of making war upon the *cimarrones*, extirpating and annihilating them, for we feared lest by their favour and assistance our common enemies might cross to the Pacific Ocean. In response to which your majesty has made no provision.

Wherefore, in offence and opposition to the service of God, Our Lord, and of your majesty, have ensued damages which are irreparable unless, out of the magnitude of your majesty's most unconquerable spirit and magnificence in empire, religion and felicity of achievement, as defender of the Christian *re publica*, your majesty extend a hand in pity over this kingdom to succour it, for out of one untoward event have arisen many, as we shall herein signify.

First, our enemies have waxed numerous and rich on the many robberies they have committed and every day commit; and, consequently, your majesty's vassals have come to poverty and affliction. The cities of Nombre de Dios and Veragua have suffered and suffer hunger, because these enemies seize all the frigates carrying subsistence and also the Chagre barks, while the galleons and armada lie in these ports. These cities live in continuous alarm; neither their citizens nor we are safe in our persons, our children or our property. Therefore Nombre de Dios is almost completely abandoned, and (p. 2) not thirty residents have remained to inhabit it. Unless your majesty apply a proper remedy all the kingdom will be reduced to ruin.

On the Atlantic side, some twenty-four leagues from Nombre de Dios, there is a bay called the Gulf of Acla, or Uraba, where formerly was the settlement of Acla; and on the Pacific side there is another such bay, thirty leagues from this city, called the Gulf of San Miguel, which is opposite the Gulf of Acla on the north side. These gulfs make the land so narrow here that as the crow flies it is not eight leagues across; by land, travelling over the mountain range which is the divide or watershed, the distance is about twelve leagues.

Here, at this place, led by the *cimarrones* with whom they are allied and confederated, fifty Englishmen (fearing neither

God nor your majesty) crossed from the Gulf of Acla to the Gulf of San Miguel. All the ships and barks which come from Peru must necessarily pass by the Gulf of San Miguel.

Of good cedar (of which there is much in this country) having built a launch rowing twelve oars each side, guided by the *cimarrones* and accompanied by ten of their chieftains, these Englishmen went to the Pearl Islands, and took and stole a large quantity of pearls and jewels of gold and silver from persons living there; and they delivered over to the ten *cimarrones* seventy head of slaves, including women and children, who were engaged in pearl fishing and trading. They burned and reduced to ashes all the canoes and brigantines there were in those islands, in order that there might be no craft available by which to send news.

What is felt most deeply, being cause for tears, is the little veneration they show the saints and the worship of God. They broke up images and crucifixes, they overturned the altar, knocking it to pieces. They used albs and vestments as kitchen-aprons. They beat and buffeted a Franciscan friar who happened to be there, ridiculing the pope, confession and absolution. They committed many other insults and insolencies, for which God give us due vengeance, in defending His honour by your majesty's unconquerable arms.

From one of these islands a canoe set out which had word of what was occurring, although it was not known who the assailants were; and it brought advice to this city that the English had raided the Pearl Islands. As soon as he heard the news, Doctor Gabriel de Loarte, your majesty's president of this *Audiencia*, took every measure which could be taken by a good commander and servitor of your majesty, zealous in the service of God, Our Lord, and in your majesty's. Therefore immediately he despatched a ship for the coast of Peru to warn all barks and vessels coming up with gold and silver, belonging to your majesty and to private persons, to stop wherever the warning found them. He wrote to the viceroy of Peru to send ships and men and munitions for defence and offence against the enemy. He also detailed 100 men to protect the ships which were at Perico, the port of this city,

two leagues from it, in order that the enemy might not seize them and strengthen himself with the possession of formidable vessels in the Pacific. He raised an armada to go against the enemy by sea. He made it ready with great diligence and care, but could not do so quickly because there were no barks or vessels suitable to proceed against the enemy which would not require eleven days in which to prepare; on receipt of the news two of them were dragged into the water by the sheer strength of negro slaves, for it was the period of low tides and they were high upon the beach.

This day a bark reached this city from Guayaquil, which is the port of San Francisco de Quito. The English had looted it. It had on board more than 70,000 *pesos* in gold, belonging to your majesty and private persons, and a great quantity of biscuit, bacon and cheese, and shoes, and three demijohns of Quito powder, which is better than the powder sent from Spain; of all of which the English were lacking and in great need. These people who were robbed brought the news that the corsairs had departed the night before.

Immediately the armada, which the president, Doctor Loarte, had raised, went after them, Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor and inspector, commanding. He went to the gulf, searching all the rivers which the English entered. The president sent another forty men overland by way of the mountain range to cut off their retreat. Everything humanly possible has been done. May Our Lord prosper the activity and good intention he displays in the service of God, Our Lord, and of your majesty.

These men who were robbed have stated that the English greatly desired to meet and rob Miguel Angel, who was bringing up more than 1,300,000 *pesos* belonging to your majesty and to private persons. It is held certain that although that ship had 200 persons on board, had they met, the enemy would have taken them by surprise, and off guard and unarmed, with no thought of such a happening. (p. 3)

The English captain is called John Ax<sup>1</sup>. He is thick of speech. His interpreter is called Chalona, and speaks

<sup>1</sup> Oxenham.

with a Portuguese accent. He<sup>1</sup> is a man of grave demeanour, much feared and respected and obeyed by his soldiers. They say that he is very happy to have opened a way from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He expects to be greatly rewarded by his queen for so doing and promises that next year he will enter there to settle with 2000 men and make himself master of all this realm, the strength of which is very little to resist such an onslaught as he announces, unless greatly reinforced by your majesty, whom we entreat to have compassion on us, your majesty's vassals, and to send succour sufficient to withstand such force.

Most humbly we entreat your majesty, who dominates mighty monarchs and in every quarter of the world makes his unconquerable arms terrible to his enemies in defence of the Christian religion, to forbid that here in this new land the sect of Luther be implanted. The *cimarrones* are already as Lutheran as the English, and so by their acts and words declare and manifest themselves to be. They are easily taught any doctrine, evil or good, which is presented to them.

To obviate so great evil we entreat your majesty to deign to order four galleys to be provided to cross with this next fleet, and to send 400 men to settle two towns of 200 householders each, one at Acla and the other on the Gulf of San Miguel, that they may scatter and eliminate these *cimarrones*, inasmuch as they have brought such heavy damage upon us. The key to all these Indies and their safety consists in granting us the boon we ask; your majesty has been generous with the Chileans and with Santa Marta, sending them considerable reinforcements and relief, although they are less important than this realm to the service of your majesty, whose clemency is so bounteous that we are confident of receiving the favour asked.

Our Lord preserve the Catholic royal person of your majesty with prosperity and increase of greater kingdoms and lordships as we, your majesty's servants, desire.

Panama, April 15, 1577.

<sup>1</sup> Oxenham.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Servitors who kiss your majesty's royal feet and hands.

*Gerónimo Nuñez.*

*Francisco de Naba Céspedes.*

*Juan Rodríguez Bautista.*

*Pedro de la Roca.*

*Alonso de Luque.*

*Balthazar de Melo.*

*Pedro [—]ño.*

*Juan Bastida Gutierrez.*

*Diego de Frias.*

*Diego del Castillo.*

Clerk of the Council.

(Rubrics) . . .

(p. 4) . . . Received August 15 of the same year . . .



## Document No. 39<sup>1</sup>

[The Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios,  
April 17, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty. . .*

(p. 3) . . . Because of the sins which we who live in this land have committed, God permitted to befall what we have so long foreseen, and English corsairs allied with the *cimarrones* have crossed to the Pacific. There on Ash Wednesday they fell upon the Pearl Islands, fourteen leagues from here, where they did great damage in carrying off the negroes and negresses they found there. These the *cimarrones* carried away, and the English took all the gold and silver and pearls that were there.

In order that word might not be sent to this city, they sunk all the barks they found. In a canoe two men arrived here on March 6 from whom we learned of their presence. Otherwise they might very safely have entered Panama and made themselves masters of the country and despoiled it, because it was so off guard. There were here more than 420,000 *pesos* of your majesty's, not counting much money belonging to private individuals, awaiting this fleet.

Next day at sunset they appeared off the port at the time when a muster was being held; and since they saw that their presence had been perceived they returned to the islands, where they took a bark coming up from Guayaquil with some 38,000 *pesos* in fine gold, according to the manifest, and, they say, perhaps another 20,000 which did not appear upon those papers, all in gold. They carried it off, as well as a lot of shoes and biscuit and powder, together with all the arms and other subsistence. Therewith they departed.

They were very anxious to meet Miguel Angel's ship from Peru, which was expected. It came in on March 28 with over 1,300,000 *pesos*, including 1200 bars belonging to your

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2116), Panama 33, 1½ *pliego*, original.

majesty. They could have taken him easily because they all sail so off their guard and unarmed—without even swords—and since they come alongside these vessels in the vicinity of the islands, those on board suppose they are the brigantines of the pearl fishers, since they see a launch with oars.

But a squadron of six vessels and 200 men had cleared from Panama, despatched by the president, with Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor and inspector for this realm, in command, which met the said ship, and a bark carrying fifty soldiers escorted it into harbour. The rest went after the English.

When they saw this squadron they burned two barks they had and in a launch disappeared among the islands, which are numerous there. Our people say they have surrounded the islands and that the enemy cannot get away. God help us, for if they get away with such rich booty they will return in greater numbers, since now they know the country and have seen its weakness, unless your majesty remedy the situation by furnishing galleys to patrol this north coast, to prevent them joining up with the *cimarrones*, and in order also to make war on these latter, who are as Lutheran now as the English. And it would be advisable to maintain a small galliot and a launch at Panama in readiness to pursue them, for if they occupy this pass it will be very difficult to recover it, and this is the key to Peru and the halting-place of all this gold which comes down from there.

God grant us the victory! If these get off with this booty they will return in such strength that remedy will be impossible.

(p. 4) . . . Nombre de Dios, April 17, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servants,

*Tristan de Silva Canpofrio.*

*Agustin de Haro.*

*Pedro de Ortega Hidalgo.* (Rubrics) . . .

## Document No. 40<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Sotomayor, deposition, Panama, April 17, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

In the city of Panama, in the kingdom of Tierra Firme in the Indies, on the fifteenth day of the month of April in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy seven, the illustrious Señor Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla, member of his majesty's council and judge of his royal *Audiencia* sitting in this city, stated that, as is publicly known, led and aided by the *cimarrones* who are in outlawry in the wilds of this realm, fifty English Lutherans, enemies of our holy Catholic faith and Christian religion, entered into the Pacific;

Who, in addition to the robberies they committed and damage they did in stealing from the people of the Pearl Islands and in looting the barks and ships which they took on the sea, in those islands wherever they went broke to pieces all the images they found, both of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of His glorious Mother, the Holy Virgin Mary, and also of other saints;

Destroying consecrated altars, chalices, profaning articles used in celebration of mass, and with great boldness and audacity uttering many blasphemies and heresies of the evil sect of Martin Luther, seeking to persuade all to esteem and believe him, in which they were seconded by nine *cimarrones* they had with them to whom they taught his dogma, instructing them in their evil and false beliefs and heresies;

Burning a church and the images which were in it;

Speaking evil in vituperation of his holiness and illtreating certain priests they captured;

In disservice of God, Our Lord.

And in order to inform his majesty of it, that he may take suitable action, he ordered the following evidence to be received:

<sup>1</sup> A. de I. 2-5-1/20, 33, Patronato 265, 5 pliegos, legalized copy.

...in the said city of Panama, on the seventeenth day of the month of April in the year one thousand five hundred and  
*Witness.* seventy seven, for the aforesaid purpose his honour ordered to appear before him Diego de Sotomayor, resident of the said city, whom he swore by God, Our Lord, and by the sign of the cross, under which oath he promised to speak the truth; and being questioned according to the commencement of this writ, stated that:

Deponent with his wife and children being on that one of the Pearl Islands which is called Chapera on the first Monday in Lent just passed, and so also his father-in-law, Juan de Manzaneda, and his wife, being on that island, at daybreak, (p. 2) before sunrise, a launch arrived at the said island, and in it about fifty Englishmen. They had with them nine *cimarrones* and an Indian, armed with their bows and arrows. Among which blacks one was Juan Vaquero, a negro leader. They all landed on the said island and ordered deponent to give them the gold, silver and pearls.

After they had taken from him everything he had, having found certain books which were the first and second part of the pontifical, they asked him why he had those books, which were lies, adding that the pope was a . . . , and that he should not believe in him. They seized the bulls of the holy crusade, which deponent had, and asked him how much he had been charged for them, and when deponent replied that each one had cost him a *peso*, these English said that they were supplied merely to get money out of deponent, because if they were of any value they would not be sold for money, whereat they threw the bulls upon the floor and trampled on them and tore them.

Having found a child's lesson-book, one of the English named Chalona, who is the interpreter among them, stopped to read it, and reading the ten commandments, when he came to the commandment: *Thou shalt not steal*, he laughed loudly at it, and said that all goods were common property; and all of them laughed and jeered at the commandments and remarked that one was missing, for there should be eleven commandments.

So also, among other books deponent possessed, they found one of the evangels and epistles, in Spanish; and they bade him read that book, because it was a good book, and ordered him to treat it well, inasmuch as the others were fabrications and all lies; and deponent took the book and put it away.

Next the said English opened deponent's chests to take his clothing and what else they might find; and having found a crucifix in a box, their captain looked deponent in the face wrathfully and holding up the crucifix in his hands demanded: "Why hast thou this?" And threw it at deponent, but missed him, and it struck a stand, which broke the crucifix to pieces. Witness gathered up these pieces and brought them (p. 3) to this city and gave them to the precentor of the holy church.

So also they found that deponent had a veronica framed in a frame, and the English captain demanded to know why he had so many gods. Deponent replied that he did not consider this picture to be God, but the image and likeness of God to bring Him to mind. The said captain laid hand upon a dagger and with its handle struck the veronica two blows in the face and slashed it with the blade, and ripped it from a board upon which it was, and broke off a piece and threw it upon the floor and trampled upon it. Presently deponent took it up and put it away and has it in his possession with the marks of these wounds and blows upon it; which veronica he exhibited. They threw to the floor all the other images, urging and seeking to persuade deponent and his wife not to believe the saints or the friars, because it was all witchcraft, and they sinners like the rest of us.

And after they had done all that has been stated and committed other outrages and heresies which deponent does not at the present recall, and had taken from him and stolen many pearls, and ear-rings made of them, declaring it booty fit for the queen of England, they proceeded to Juan Manzaneda's hut, deponent's father-in-law, where witness saw that the English had smashed the consecrated altar he had there for the celebration of mass and thrown it down at the kitchen door, where all passed in and out, that they might walk over

it, as they did. Deponent ordered the pieces to be gathered up, in small fragments, which also he delivered to the said precentor.

And because a small child, aged little over two years, who was there with other children, called out: "Boys, let us pick up Holy Mary," and began to gather up the images and bulls from the ground<sup>1</sup>, as a result of which the child was very ill; and they prevented the child from gathering up these things, exclaiming that he was a knave.

The English cook took the alb used in the ceremony of the mass and put it on and danced about in it, ridiculing everything; which performance the *cimarrones* witnessed. It delighted them and they gave great evidence of their pleasure, saying; "I, English; pure Lutheran." Afterwards the said Englishman cut the alb short and kept it on for a shirt and wore his own clothes over it.

Of the church the English made a kitchen where they did their cooking, and they burned it and the images which were in it; and because (p. 4) a little girl brought out a picture of the Magdalene painted on a canvas, and put out the flames which were consuming it, they threatened her and bade her drop it, and called her a troublesome slut.

They remained eight days in the said island, all in Lent; and they ate meat every day, and inquired of deponent and the rest why they did not eat of the same, asking why they kept any fast day, and saying that it is not what goes into a man's mouth but what comes out of it, which defiles.

In all which violent demonstration of heresy they were attended and assisted by the said *cimarrones*, who continuously exhorted deponent and the rest not to believe in the Holy Trinity nor in Our Lady, Holy Mary, declaring that there was only one God; and that there was no need to confess to anybody, except in the heart to God alone, and that God was not a married man to have a Son on whom to believe.

During which time Juan Constantino, cleric, commissary of the holy office of the inquisition, and a Franciscan friar with him, arrived at the port of that island. They removed

<sup>1</sup> Apparently some words have been omitted in the original.

Constantino's bonnet and because his crown was not shaven they let him alone and did nothing to him.

But all the Englishmen took the friar and buffeted him and put a chamber-pot upon his head and struck him many fisticuffs upon the head. The friar was humble, exclaiming: "So be it, for the love of God." They seated him in a chair which was there, saying to him: "You are God, . . . , to confess and absolve sins," and, ridiculing him, they knelt before him and talked to him in Latin. Deponent begged them to let the friar alone and assured them that he was a cook that they might not kill him. The next day they showed the friar a wooden cross which was there and asked him what it was; and when the friar answered that it was the image and likeness of the cross upon which Jesus Christ, Our Lord, was crucified, the English replied: "So, . . . ; well, that's where we will hang you and burn you before we go." To which the said friar answered that he did not merit so much honour; and at this they left him.

And at the end of eight days they departed, bidding deponent and the rest not to leave the island, for they would come to see them again soon.

During the time that they were there they committed (p. 5) so many outrages that deponent does not remember them all; and this is what he knows, and the truth under the oath he took; and he is about forty years old.

His deposition was read to him and he ratified it and signed it, as did the said judge.

Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla.

Diego de Sotomayor.

Before me, Fernando de Medina, his majesty's notary<sup>1</sup>. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Here follows the deposition of Juan de Manzaneda who, as his son-in-law states, was on the island with his wife. He declares that forty English arrived with nine negroes and an Indian, of whom one party went to his son-in-law's house while the other came to his.

" . . . a negress, slave to deponent, opened the door at the dogs' barking, and ran back into the house crying: 'My lady, the French!' They beat at the door and deponent came down, and a crowd of them entered into his house. . . ." The larger party was then at Sotomayor's. Manzaneda recognized the intruders as English.

They seated him in a chair "and the negro Juan Vaquero, who was one

of the *cinarrones* and their leader, threw an iron collar about deponent's neck and laid hand on his machete to strike deponent, who appealed to the English not to permit a negro to mistreat him, and they prevented it; and so they held him until their captain arrived." They then searched the house and upon finding a crucifix at the head of deponent's bed, and other images, they destroyed them, declaring that "there is but one God."

On p. 7 follows the deposition of Fray Miguel de los Angeles, the Franciscan who so very inopportunistly arrived at the island with Constantino. They had approached in the night, and lay to, awaiting dawn. Englishmen came out from the land and boarded, with a great deal of racket. "...and when the captain of the English saw deponent he struck him a heavy blow upon the head with his sheathed sword, crying: '—, to deceive Christians.' The English destroyed an image of the Virgin, books, rosaries, an altar..." and the English captain took the wafers which they were bringing for the celebration of Mass, and forced one into deponent's mouth, saying: "Behold your God! Is this your God?" And witness answered no, for only after consecration is Jesu Christ there.

On p. 9 Constantino's deposition begins. He was taking the friar to the island to confess the slaves there. When the English boarded, Constantino went out to them; upon learning there was a religious aboard they ordered him to appear. The English captain struck the friar repeatedly over the head, irritated by sight of his tonsure, and kicked an image of the Virgin into the sea.

Constantino and the English quarrelled over the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Spaniard valiantly defending Catholicism, the English as hotly abusing the pope and every distinctively Catholic dogma. The English compelled Constantino to repeat the commandments; and he asserted that theft and booty were *their* gods.

On p. 13 begins Sotomayor's wife's deposition. The cook who danced in the alb (later a prisoner in Panama) assured her: "Look here, madame. This year every Spaniard is to pay. Say not a word—this is nothing compared to what's coming. Now we have come only to open the way. Presently you will see great things." She adds further details concerning the wanton desecration of sacred utensils in which Oxenham personally and his men indulged.



## Document No. 41<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Loarte<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, April 26, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty . . .*

(p. 8) By the despatch-boat I have already reported to your majesty what negligence I found in this realm with respect to its defence against the many enemies, corsairs and *cimarrones*, who beset it by land and sea, and what care I was exerting to set this matter somewhat to rights, that one might live here in some security. This vessel having departed, for some days—until Don Cristóbal de Erasso arrived—there was no news of corsairs, nor that the *cimarrones* had made any sally.

*From here on,  
concerning  
war.*

From Don Cristóbal de Erasso I had news that he had encountered (p. 9) seven corsair ships as he came into the Caribbean, with which he had two brushes, one—the first—of little importance, and another off the port of La Margarita, where, because he had it in a tight place, one of these seven ships set itself on fire. There were taken only certain men who leaped overboard.

From them it was learned that they and another captain with four ships, and another with more, sixteen sail in all, are all out with the intention to sack these cities of the Main, and cross to the Pacific; and that there are among them captains and men who, allied with the *cimarrones*, in the year '73 made those famous assaults on the highway from this city to that of Nombre de Dios; and that they have with them two negroes, *cimarrones*, whom they carried off at that time.

Afterwards, Don Cristóbal being in the harbour of Nombre de Dios, two leagues from that port, toward Cartagena, a frigate of Don Cristóbal's armada, which had lagged behind, met a corsair ship. Having exchanged shots, they grappled,

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 6½ pliegos, original.

<sup>2</sup> President of the *Audiencia*.

and just when the enemy was about to surrender, the frigate's pilot, who, it seems, was a Portuguese, turned the rudder so that they drew apart, and the corsair fled.

This same ship sent out sixteen or eighteen men in a launch, which at the mouth of the Chagre took two barks that were coming down from Cruces empty. Nevertheless, the corsair found 3000 or 4000 *pesos* in gold and silver on board them. From another frigate out of Veragua he got some 2000 *pesos* in gold, from another which was coming from Nicaragua, by the Desaguadero, laden with poultry and subsistence for Nombre de Dios<sup>1</sup> . . . .

All this happened while both fleets lay at anchor at Nombre de Dios, without their doing a thing to intimate a desire to defend the coast, although, for my part, I have done everything possible to get them out for the purpose. They excused themselves by saying that they had no launches, and these were necessary.

The corsair ship which put out this launch was anchored in the bay called Del Almirante, close by Veragua. It released a Spaniard who had been a prisoner on board for days. He gave warning that in this ship's company were three more at Isla Fuerte in Acla harbour, which carried (p. 10) 250 men, and that their plan was to loot Nombre de Dios, once the fleets had left, and to cross to the Pacific.

All these things have given me more worry and work than I can here set forth, for I must say that not only as many corsairs as they say are coming, but much fewer could take that city. To cross over to the Pacific is so easy for them, since the whole field is theirs, given their alliance with the *cimarrones*, that I am amazed they should have delayed so long. By the way of Acla it is not twenty leagues across, and only six or seven of these are by land, the rest being down a river which runs into Sant Miguel Gulf. This latter is on the route of all the ships which come from Peru. At the mouth of this river, and of others in that vicinity, they can build a thousand ships!

The suspicion that they intend to cross to the Pacific was

<sup>1</sup> There seems to be some omission in the original.

confirmed by the deposition of two *cimarrones* who were captured, and before they were executed under torture admitted the alliance they had entered into with the corsairs. These deposed that they expected them this year and had offered to carry their materials for ship building, cordage and tar, and everything else they might bring, as far as the river.

All which agrees with the information your majesty was pleased to order to be sent to this royal *Audiencia* concerning ships coming to settle at Acla and cross to the Pacific. What with the assurance received from the president of the *Audiencia* at Santo Domingo that more than sixteen corsair ships have passed there on the way here, I have not slept. On the contrary, I believe that I have taken every possible measure.

When the fleets left, to winter at Cartagena, to strengthen the force there, I sent into Nombre de Dios forty effectives, twenty paid by that city out of its revenues, and the other twenty paid out of funds available for war. There are plenty of harquebuses and artillery there for the defence of the place. If everybody does his duty, it is strong enough to resist three hundred English or French, by land. That city has been well taken care of, and so also this city of Panama, at times when care has seemed (p. 11) necessary.

A muster was held in this city and there were found in it 500 fighting men, 300 having harquebuses and other arms, like pikes, and defensive weapons. There are fifty horse, and, further (to have a supply available), I ordered to be purchased of the fleet sixty harquebuses, three field pieces for this city, twelve cavalry lances, fifty pikes and half pikes, thirteen hundredweight of powder, lead and match.

I have ordered this city to maintain, ordinarily, a militia force of fifty soldiers with their arms, who shall be ready to sally as may be required and to guard the city; this is a picked body, selected from among government officials and business men. They receive quite moderate pay, provided out of the city's revenues.

I sent out an officer with thirty soldiers, to go from this city by land to the coast of Acla, to discover whether any corsairs had landed. He was unable to reach Acla, because of

the many swamps, since it is winter, and only brought news that along certain rivers of that coast he found signs of negroes moving toward Acla.

By the Pacific I sent a brigantine with an officer and soldiers to enter into the mouths of rivers here by which these corsairs might come down to this ocean, to see whether there was any indication of their having emerged there, or that they had built or were building any vessel. This man found no such sign, although he looked carefully.

I despatched another brigantine along the north coast with a captain and soldiers to see whether it were true that those three ships were anchored at Acla, as reported by the man the corsair released. He found two frigates and a shallop anchored on the Acla coast in the harbour called Pinas<sup>1</sup>. He fired on them with his artillery, saw those on board escape to land, grappled with the frigates, and took them.

On shore, in the vicinity, they had begun to erect a fort. Having removed from it certain clothing which they had inside, he withdrew to the frigates, setting fire to the fort, and, fearing lest they come down on him in greater force than he could resist, he came back with the frigates.

On board the frigates and in the fort there was a quantity of cloth and linens and some silks, and many storm-coats of the sort the French and English wear, (p. 12) iron-work for ships, cordage, and the anchors of their own ships, which they had burned, considering better those frigates which they had stolen from private owners.

There were also found seven good pieces of iron ordnance and some munition.

Part of this clothing was divided among the soldiers and part was sold, the proceeds to go toward the cost of the war.

This convinced me that there were corsairs ashore, joined with the *cimarrones*, because, in addition to agreeing with the report made by the man the corsair released, it seems certain

<sup>1</sup> Pinos? Pinos anchorage? Or some port a little farther north? Cf. p. 327, *post*: "where Francis Drake before had had his conference with the Negros." At or north of Pines Island and south of Drake's Fort Diego.

that those who fled from the frigates were few in number and went to join the rest, already ashore.

The moment I had this news, I equipped two frigates and the same brigantine, and a hundred men under a captain with reputation and experience in this land, to go to seek these people in that port of Acla, and follow them up, until they should be extirpated; and despite my best efforts, just when they were ready to depart from Nombre de Dios the west wind set in so strongly they were unable to leave that port.

At this juncture I received word that a corsair<sup>1</sup> was off the coast of Veragua. The west wind was favourable to their proceeding thither, and inasmuch as they could not sail toward Acla, I ordered them to go after this corsair. They had the good luck to find him in such a position that it seemed he could not escape, but I think there was lack of spirit in the commanding officer. In fine, I believe they wounded many of the enemy and he abandoned a frigate to them. Of ours, one artilleryman died of a gunshot wound they gave him. It must be our sins God seeks to punish with such unsatisfactory accomplishments.

On board the frigate which was taken were found seventeen or eighteen men whom the enemy was keeping prisoners, and a little French lad, the captain's page, who, because he is so young, has not been executed. I send him to those realms<sup>2</sup> because there is none of these people but is suspect in matters of the Faith, and if he were brought up in these parts he might eventually do damage here by rejoining corsairs. He goes consigned to the House of Trade in order that, there, he may be disposed of as your majesty may be pleased to order.

Through the negligence of these persons, or because God (p. 13) so permitted, they failed to discover certain corsairs who by way of Acla had joined the *cimarrones*. It has not been learned whether these were the owners of the frigates which the captain of the brigantine took.

Having crossed to the Pacific, in a galliot rowing twelve oars to the side and with the assistance of the *cimarrones* they

<sup>1</sup> A Frenchman.

<sup>2</sup> Spain.

carried along with them, at the beginning of last February they fell upon the Pearl Islands, which are twenty leagues from this city, and robbed the Spanish houses there and carried off seventy negroes. In order that the news might not be brought to this city, they took such good pains to burn or knock the bottoms out of all the barks there were at the islands, that nothing was known of the matter until twenty-two days later, when a man escaped in a canoe and brought the tidings, although not as accurately as might have been desired.

The day I had this news, a ship was despatched to carry word to Peru, that the ships coming down with silver and gold should be on the alert, and within six days I sent out six vessels, with oars and sails, and in them 200 men, seamen and soldiers, to patrol the sea and punish these corsairs; and the very day they sailed they met a ship coming down from Quito from which they had stolen 80,000 *pesos* in gold, and with this booty upon some warning they had of the armada setting out against them, they went inland by the rivers down which they had emerged, and the armada went after them, and, picking up a trail, hunted them in many river mouths and inlets there are along that coast.

At the same time, while I was taking this measure, by land I sent out another company of soldiers who know those mountains to hunt them in the interior, if by chance they should escape from the armada. That they might not come out by way of Acla, where they entered, nor any reinforcement of other corsairs join them, I discussed with Don Cristóbal the sending of part of his armada to guard that coast carefully. He responded with good will and sent two frigates of his armada, and the brigantine and another frigate which I had in the harbour of Nombre de Dios, which he manned with his people and with artillery which I gave him for the frigate on guard on that coast.

As soon as Don Cristóbal de Erasso heard the news that corsairs had crossed to this ocean, from Nombre de Dios he wrote me his opinion as to what should be done. We had been so active here that when his letter arrived the measures I have

described had already been taken, and I was pleased to find that they were the same he advised. Not content with having written, (p. 14) with more than thirty harquebusiers he came in person to this city to do whatever there might be to do, and with such humility that he sought only to serve your majesty and to be of help in this emergency. He remained here until on account of the fleet's departure it became advisable for him to go.

On the 18th of this present month of April, the armada which I had sent out against the corsairs appeared in the harbour of this city of Panama, bearing such good news that it cheered all this city and realm. *The event.*

Which news was that, having sought them along the rivers up which they had gone, on the river Balsas<sup>1</sup>, fifty leagues up from the sea, they came upon them at anchor. They had sent all the gold and silver which they had stolen to a negro village which is five leagues from there, and were gathering together everything else they had with them, to convey it to the same village. Ours gave them battle there and killed the most of them, as well as many *cimarrones*, among these being two negro captains. The rest fled to the village, where the English captain was.

Ours went after them and shortly found the captain and his men and many negroes in a fort in the village. They were armed with some harquebuses and many bows and arrows. Ours closed in and took the fort, killing some English, but the captain and others fled, abandoning all their arms. The captain was wounded with two harquebus shots. And so ours remained masters of the village.

Next, our men sought the gold and silver which the corsairs had left buried, and found a large part of it, to a value of more than 100,000 ducats in gold and silver, including more than 4000 *pesos* in gold and over 1900 in silver, belonging to your majesty. And with this victory, they returned to this city.

Arrived here, there was returned to your majesty's royal treasury all that had been stolen from your majesty's revenues

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 132, and its note 2; 173; 179, and its note 1.

from the vessel which came from Quito, and to others, private persons, was restored all that summary investigation showed to have been taken from them. These, voluntarily, gave ten per cent. of this in accordance with certain vows which the general commanding this armada had made to Our Lady and certain churches, and to reward the soldiers who dug it up and on their backs brought the treasure down to the place where the armada had remained. All this appears in the records of proceedings and depositions which I send your majesty.

According to the deposition of four prisoners, youths who were taken, (p. 15) it seems that eighteen or twenty of the English escaped with their lives, but without their arms, among them the captain and five other brave ones, courageous enough to undertake any big thing. Further, it appears that on the northern coast, where they struck inland, they left two launches hidden, with sails and cordage, and two brass pieces and four or five thousand *pesos* buried.

In order that these men who escaped should not return to the launches and with them and the plate they left buried return to England and carry news of the confederation they have entered into with the *cimarrones*, and of the ease with which they can cross to the Pacific, I have sent a captain with soldiers and two of these English prisoners, who say they will show where all this is.

They are to take it and hunt down the captain and the rest who fled, and capture or kill them. They are to attack a village of *cimarrones* which is nearby, whose people showed these English the way, that they may be punished for such audacity. I trust in God that all will go well.

At least, these are the immediate measures it seemed should be taken, and since winter comes suddenly, the matter of the war will rest here. If it were the beginning of summer I would endeavour to send to punish these negroes for having led the corsairs inland.

Your majesty will take note that these prisoners state that before we had this victory, their captain said he would return to England and come presently with 2000 men to settle among



the *cimarrones* and infest the Pacific. I think that neither he nor any of his men who fled will return to England, for either the negroes, disconcerted by their defeat, will kill them, or they will fall into the hands of the captain I have, as stated, sent out.

Having heard this good news, Don Cristóbal de Erasso has written me that he desires to recall the armada's frigates which, as I have said, he had detailed to protect the Acla coast. If I could persuade him not to do so, it would be a good thing; if I cannot, I shall have to shoulder the whole business, as heretofore.

For this expedition, because of the ability I saw in him, I commissioned Pedro de Ortega Valencia to command. He is your majesty's factor in this realm, and certainly he has served your majesty with much zeal and care and labour and personal courage, always observing the instructions I gave him. I feel confident that no other man would have succeeded in doing it so well. By my order and that of this royal *Audiencia* he is going to report to your majesty on the event and to entreat your majesty to provide sufficiently for the future... (p. 25)....

...Panama, April 26, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant,

*Doctor Loarte* (Rubric)....

## Document No. 42<sup>1</sup>

[The City of Panama to the Crown, April 26, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

After we had written to your majesty how the English allied with the *cimarrones* had crossed into the Pacific, and of their robbery of 70,000 *pesos*, what has occurred (in addition) is that among the many precautionary measures taken by Doctor Gabriel de Loarte, your majesty's president of this royal *Audiencia*, one of the most important was to despatch Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor and inspector of your majesty's royal treasury, in command of six frigates, brigantines and vessels, as we have reported, who, with fortune favouring him, went to the Gulf of San Miguel in pursuit of the corsair.

He and his captains went up many very large rivers which empty into that gulf and found no trace at all, except that on one bank they came upon a quantity of nails, hemp, saws and other things pertaining to carpentry. Then, guided by the Divine Majesty, they went up a stream which is called Pedro de Ortega<sup>2</sup>, which they were eight days in ascending, for it stretches far into the Vallano region. When his vessels could go no higher, because the river was low in its bed, since it was summer, the general landed with sixty of his soldiers, bidding the rest, under certain of his captains, remain on guard over these vessels. He pressed into the mountains, leaving and returning to this river many times.

He found the trail of the English, who had left pork and biscuits, which they carried, on the river bank where they stopped to eat. After four days' journeyings, on Tuesday of Holy Week, having come to a halt, at ten in the morning they heard two harquebus shots.

The general ordered a soldier to go into the bush to discover what this meant, who went, and on the river bank saw some thirty English and more than eighty negroes, who were cooking a quantity of pork in kettles and amusing themselves

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-40 (215), Panama 30, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> The Tuyra? The Chucunaque?

together. They had a canvas awning stretched, where they were unloading the biscuit and everything else they had in the launch. Being of light draft (drawing little over a palm of water) it had been able to navigate so far up. The soldier returned to report to the general.

Having exhorted his soldiers like a most Christian captain, he ordered them to offer a prayer to God, Our Lord: and in utter silence, that they might not be perceived by any, they came up through the trees and gave the enemy the first volley, which killed more than twenty-five of the English and many of the negroes, who fled with some of the English (p. 2).

Following this up, when he had rested that day, a *cimarron* and an English lad having surrendered to him, Ortega Valencia began to march in search of the enemy, and on Holy Thursday arrived at the village of the negroes. There the English captain, fortified with the *cimarrones* and what men he had left, awaited attack in his fort.

Invoking our patron, the Apostle Saint James, the general stormed the work and in a long hour's fight killed many of the enemy and wounded most of the rest. Ours suffered little damage, for the enemy had few harquebuses, being mostly armed with bows and arrows. The enemy abandoned the village, setting fire to part of it, and fled into the bush, where it is understood that they will have died, being wounded. Having seen what damage they have received on account of the English, the negroes will have killed any survivors. The general captured three boys and an Englishman who was shot through the leg.

Having achieved this victory, the general immediately sought the booty the enemy had carried off and could not find it that day or the next, until on Easter Sunday, having exerted pressure on one of the boys he had captured, he said he would lead him to the place where they had buried it. Therefore *Sargento Mayor* Antonio de Salzedo with a dozen men went to the place the boy indicated.

They dug and found twenty-seven bundles or bags of gold and thirty-three of current silver, and thirteen bars, which was all the English took from the bark which came from

Quito; they found also more gold and silver which they got from other robberies they had committed on the Atlantic. All this was brought before the general, who rendered greater service in defending it from his friends and soldiers than in retaking it from his enemies! He brought it to President Gabriel de Loarte, who made a complete inventory of it and of many jewels which General Pedro de Ortega recovered in addition to this gold and silver. These are being delivered to those persons who appear to be the owners.

The little English lad who told where the gold was, stated that on the Atlantic side at the point where they entered inland, the English left two launches (which they brought from England). They opened two cocks and sunk these under water in a river in order, when they should have captured booty in the Pacific, to raise them and in them depart. So also he said that these English had buried a great amount in bars and current silver in the bush, and that he would show the place where they had hidden these launches and bars.

Not wishing to lose this excellent opportunity, President Gabriel de Loarte has commissioned one of the captains who went with General Pedro de Ortega, named Luis García de Melo, to go with fifty men to get the launches and dig up the silver from the place in which they hid it. To this end he has taken the English lads with him, who have offered to show him the place. Our Lord grant that he may achieve this end as happily as the commencement was made and continued!

As procurator for this city we sent to court General Pedro de Ortega Valencia, to whom your majesty may give entire credence in respect to everything that has occurred in this affair, and to him we refer. He is very faithful and diligent in your majesty's service, as he has shown by his works. He deserves from your majesty honour and reward in greater matters and more important offices in the service, for we certify to your majesty that Pedro Menéndez did not merit more recognition, nor do as much in killing Jean Ribaut and all his company in Florida, as Pedro de Ortega Valencia has done in defeating and capturing John Oxenham<sup>1</sup> (so the

<sup>1</sup> "Ax" in the original.

captain of these corsairs was called) and in killing most of his soldiers, and from him recovering such valuable plunder (p. 3) as the booty he had taken. For had Oxenham succeeded in his undertaking, it would have entailed the total ruin of this realm and the utmost damage and disturbance through all Peru. By his achievement the general has somewhat reassured and quieted that region. Had they carried their enterprise through, we are certain that every man of John Oxenham's company would have equipped a vessel in his own country to return here.

We entreat your majesty, in order to make safe this kingdom and all Peru, to deign to send us the four galleys for which we have asked, and 400 men to establish a settlement on the Atlantic in the Gulf of Acla and another on the Pacific in the Gulf of San Miguel, with force enough by fire and sword to uproot and scatter the *cimarrones* and bar the entrance of the infidels into the interior and to prevent their crossing to this ocean. We hope for this relief by the next fleet, your majesty lending attention to the misery and calamity in which we dwell in this realm, vexed and molested by our enemies, against whom on every occasion that offers we render service to your majesty in our persons and in our properties, with the loyalty and fidelity due to your majesty; *Galleys.*

Whose Catholic royal person Our Lord preserve and elevate in perpetual felicity with increase of more kingdoms and lordships, as all Christianity desires.

Panama, April 26, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servants who kiss your majesty's royal feet and hands.

*Francisco de Naba Céspedes.*

*Gerónimo Nuñez.*

*Agustín de Haro.*

*Juan Rodríguez Bautista.*

*Pedro de la Roca.*

*Alonso de Luque.*

*Balthazar de Melo.*

*Geronimo Barriga.*

*Diego de Frias.*

*Diego del Castillo,*

Clerk of the Council....

(Rubrics).

(p. 4) Received on August 15 of the same year.

## Document No. 43<sup>1</sup>

[The *Audiencia* of Panama to the Crown,  
Panama, May 1, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty...*

(p. 6) . . . From the time this fleet arrived until the present, the Atlantic coast of this realm has been much harassed by English and French corsairs, and they have there plundered many frigates and barks trading out of Nicaragua, Veragua, Cartagena and Nombre de Dios, although efforts have been made to prevent the increase of so great damage by sending out armed parties against them. All this could have been endured with less regret had there not been added to it another matter of so much and so serious detriment and danger to this realm and those of Peru as is involved in the crossing of the English corsairs, allied with the *cimarrones*, to the Pacific.

This danger has always been feared in this kingdom, and it has been reported to your majesty, particularly just before this occurrence became known, when Doctor Gabriel de Loarte, your majesty's president of this royal *Audiencia*, after discussion with this court and city, in accordance with the resolution then taken, determined to send to explore that part of the coast, and the pass by way of Acla, where it was presumed the corsairs would cross to the Pacific.

Twenty men under their officer went in a frigate and a brigantine, armed vessels, and when they arrived at Acla found two frigates anchored off that coast, in which were munitions and some spoils (p. 7) of robberies they had committed. A short way inland they came upon a fort where they found woollens, and pieces of silk, and some arms and subsistence. All this was taken without any resistance on the part of persons on guard there who, because they were few, fled into the interior.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (30), Panama 13, 4 *pliegos*, original, duplicated.

On receipt of this news it was decided to send 150 men who from that undefended quarter should proceed inland, following their trail. Just as they were about to leave from the port of Nombre de Dios, adverse weather (westerly winds) closed down upon them and prevented their sailing on that course, and so put an end to this effort.

At the same time, however, another was exerted on this Pacific side, in that a party was sent to explore its coast and indentations and river mouths by which it was presumed the corsairs might descend into this ocean. No trail whatever was picked up. This city prepared arms and munitions and your majesty's president held musters to which all available forces in this city turned out.

Some days later, at the commencement of last March, we learned that a launch carrying fifty Englishmen and some *cimarrones* was committing robberies upon this ocean. It happened as follows:

On the Atlantic coast, at Acla Bay, which is fourteen leagues from the harbour of Nombre de Dios, in the region where their fort was found, they struck inland, (p. 8) and, guided by the *cimarrones* with whom they are allied, descended by the Balsas River, and by others, until they came out into the Gulf of San Miguel, which is on this Pacific coast.

From there coming on to the Pearl Islands, in those islands they inflicted much damage and committed robberies, taking some brigantines and burning others, from which vessels the *cimarrones*, who accompanied the English, carried off many negroes. They stole a great quantity of pearls and seized barks trading out of this city, and from a ship out of Quito they got more than 4000 *pesos* of your majesty's and more than 50,000 in gold belonging to private persons.

They visited all the neighbouring islands, doing damage, to say nothing of the most grievous matter, which is that they demolished images and profaned those things which appertain to religion, and subjected to insult the priests they met, and indulged in many heresies inherent in the reprobate sect of Martin Luther.

These happenings began on the third Sunday before the

first Sunday in Lent, and seventeen days after they came out upon the Pacific it was known in this city.

Immediately, with all speed, the remedy was sought, which was to warn all the adjacent country and despatch ships for the coasts of Peru with warning in order that those coming down from there might stay wherever they were until they should be advised that the course was clear. And within ten days, your majesty's president of this royal *Audiencia*, who took special charge of (p. 9) this affair, assisted by your majesty's judges, sent out an armada of 200 harquebusiers—skilled, reliable people—placing over them as commanding officer Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor and inspector of this city, and furnishing them the equipment necessary for warfare.

They left in search of the corsairs and within forty days spent in searching this Pacific coast, entering into the rivers which empty into the ocean, and so penetrating inland, Our Lord was pleased to lead them to a trail; following it, they overtook the corsairs and fought in such manner that in two encounters they overcame and killed most of them.

Their captain—who was very valiant—escaped, with two wounds (as was later learned from the English taken prisoners).

Similarly, they killed many *cimarrones* and the negro captain, and broke them up and put them to flight, so that none remained in sight.

They recovered all the booty, silver and gold, not only that taken in the Pacific but more also, as will appear by accounts furnished to your majesty. Further, they took from them a very light launch which they had built in the bush here, which can be used to patrol this Pacific coast.

How glorious a victory this has been for this realm may be deduced from consideration of the danger in which the kingdom was, for already (p. 10) many of the richest people in the country were planning to leave it, and trade and commerce from Peru would have ceased. What is more, had these corsairs got away with the booty and so returned to their own country, they would have brought back greater numbers to destroy all here, as they planned. The gold and silver was



restored to its owners, and although some of them are short some part, nothing is missing from your majesty's consignment.

Some of these corsairs and *cimarrones* who were taken alive are being subjected to investigation under torture, and other measures are being taken for the best handling of the matter. It has seemed necessary to send again in pursuit of the rest, to scatter them completely, in order that those who have survived, and escaped by flight, may not return with news to their country. And, furthermore, in order that the *cimarrones*, for whom also the same treatment is being prepared, may be rendered less audacious in their reception of these infidels than they have shown themselves heretofore, they are to be punished by the infliction upon them of whatever penalty may be possible.

This great triumph, and the measures and precautions which your majesty's president has taken and is taking to obviate these damages, promise protection to this country, and yet will not suffice to make it entirely safe and to forestall dangers to come, unless your majesty introduce galleys to patrol (p. 11) the Tierra Firme coast on the Atlantic, as on other occasions your majesty has been entreated to do; and, similarly, on this Pacific side, provide a galliot or two to patrol it and the mouths of the rivers which empty into this ocean.

For greater safety, two settlements at least should be established, one at Acla, which is the entrance overland to the Pacific, and the other on the shores of the Gulf of San Miguel, where the corsairs came out.

With less preparedness than this, your majesty may rest assured that the danger will not be circumvented, since now the route is known. Nothing is as necessary to the defence and preservation of these realms as the measures here suggested, and from the evidence we send to your majesty in this respect, it will so appear.

In view of a royal *cédula* dated at San Lorenzo el Real on September 3, '73, wherein your majesty orders that for the war against the *cimarrones* we may spend as much as 10,000

ducats from the royal treasury, bidding us procure the co-operation of cities and merchants, this royal *Audiencia* determined to levy a tax on meat, which will bring in 1000 *pesos* per annum, and on merchandise sent from this city to Peru. This latter, being one half of one per cent., brought in 5000 *pesos* this season. The cities have contributed what they could from their revenues. The money so raised met the costs of the war up to the (p. 12) entrance of the English into the Pacific, when, since expenses must necessarily increase, as they did, your majesty's royal *Audiencia*, acting with your majesty's royal officials, drew up a resolution in conformity with your majesty's ordinance which provides that your majesty's royal treasury may be freely called upon in an emergency, pending such time as may be required fully to advise your majesty. This was an occasion when to await a reply might have entailed irreparable damage... (p. 14)...

Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor and inspector of this realm, went out as general commanding in the war against these English corsairs, and conducted it with so much prudence and valour that all the captains and soldiers engaged in it, unanimously, have much to say in his praise, and concerning the fidelity and care he exercised in recovering the gold, silver and spoils. Of this latter business we are especially informed that his intervention was important. Wherefore we are of the opinion that because of such notable service he merits your majesty's favour. This royal *Audiencia* sends him to your majesty in order that, reporting upon these events and the affairs of this realm, he may with your majesty devise remedial measures, so imperative is it that your majesty take action against so grave a danger as that which menaces these kingdoms.

Among the other officers under him who served your majesty best, one was Hernando de Berrio, long a resident of this city. Not only in this campaign, but previously in others, he has distinguished himself in the post of captain.

When he heard the news that the corsairs had appeared in the Pacific, being in Nombre de Dios at the time, your majesty's general, Don Cristóbal de Erasso, came to this city,

although your majesty's president had already taken all necessary measures.

Of four English who were brought in alive from this campaign, after they had been subjected to the necessary investigations and inquisition, one was executed in this city, and the others, being minors, will be sent consigned to your majesty's officials at Seville, in order that the holy office of that city may examine them and instruct them in matters of the Holy Faith, since for many reasons it is not desirable that they should remain here.

With them is sent also another French lad whom soldiers after another expedition brought in from the Chagre River.

But two of these English lads (p. 15), who for the time being are needed to show the way to the soldiers who have gone in search of the launches, and of the treasure which these same English left hidden, will remain behind this fleet, to follow by the first ships to go later. . . .

. . . Panama, May 1, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servants.

*Doctor Loarte.*

*Doctor Salzedo Nieto.*

*Doctor Alonso Criado de Castylla.*

*Doctor Caçeres. (Rubrics).*

(p. 16) . . . Received on August 24 of said year. . . .

## Document No. 44<sup>1</sup>

[The Royal Officials to the Crown, Nombre de Dios,  
May 7, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

...on April 19 God deigned to rejoice all this land with the happy return of your majesty's royal armada which had gone out against the English corsairs and negroes who crossed to the Pacific and there committed the robberies which we have previously reported, in command of which armada was General Pedro de Ortega Valencia, your majesty's factor for this province. He pursued them to Vallano where the negroes dwell and (following on their trail) found them and fought them twice, on both of which occasions God was pleased to grant him victory, many of them, both English and negroes, being killed. He recovered the booty, all the gold and silver they had stolen, and other things, and captured their launch, with all which he returned to Panama on that date.

This victory is held to be the most important won in the Indies, because, had the enemy got off with knowledge of the Pacific, having seen its lack of defence and its great wealth (since in a single little boat they found 100,000 *pesos*!), they would have returned in such strength that, aided by the negroes, they would have become masters of the Pacific, which God forbid, for this is the key to all Peru.

Since so much gold and silver comes down from Peru, we entreat your majesty to remedy the situation by providing the galleys for which we have repeatedly asked.

In this bark which the corsairs took there were consigned to your majesty 4000 *pesos* in gold and 1914 *pesos* 6 *tomines* in current marked silver, all of which was recovered with loss of only two small pieces of low grade gold, value 32 *pesos*; and

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-2 (2117), Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original.

private persons lost very little. To each has been delivered what appeared to belong to him.

In addition to the valorous service which the general rendered on this occasion, because of which he deserves to receive your majesty's favour, it was considered that, in view of the manner in which he found it buried, he showed marked ability in being able to protect all the gold and silver from his soldiers and bring it in without opening a package. What they did pilfer he compelled them to return, and recovered not only what the corsairs took in the Pacific but also what they had stolen in the Atlantic... (p. 2)...

...Nombre de Dios, May 7, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servants.

*Tristan de Silva Canpofrio*

*Agustin de Haro.*

*Pedro de Ortega Hidalgo.* (Rubrics)...

## Document No. 45<sup>1</sup>

[The City of Panama to the Viceroy of Peru<sup>2</sup>,

June 7, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Most Excellent Sir*

By Sebastian de Campo's (?) ship we wrote to your excellency in reply to your excellency's letter and favour to us, in which communication we reported, although briefly, on the events which to that date had occurred in the war on the Lutheran English and *cimarrones*, referring to the despatch which the royal *Audiencia* had written to your excellency. We set forth also the interest and care with which the president of this royal *Audiencia* had waged this war, and we hoped would conclude it, God willing. Subsequent events we will recount briefly, that your excellency may be fully informed and, like a mighty lord in whose hands his majesty has placed these realms, suitably provide according to the existing necessity.

We advise your excellency that the president commissioned a captain named Luis García de Melo to go with forty men to Nombre de Dios and there embark with two of the English lads—boys who were captured—that they might show the vicinity and place at Acla where were left hidden the two launches which these English had in the Atlantic, as well as the gold and silver. When Captain Melo arrived at Nombre de Dios, Don Cristóbal de Erasso, general commanding the fleet there, considering it well to handle this matter himself, took the English lads from him, transferred them to his armada, and sent one Captain Vera with eighty men in search of the launches.

After Vera had gone, the said Melo left Nombre de Dios in continuance of his voyage, with forty soldiers, in search of

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-40, Panama 30, 1 *pliego*, simple copy.

<sup>2</sup> So stated on p. 4 of the document.

these launches and the English. So it fell out that the two captains met in the port of Acla.

As Captain Melo was searching the rivers and inlets, he found the two launches, half submerged in an inlet, hidden under certain trees. At this juncture Captain Vera came up, and by agreement they divided these launches between them, each taking one. They found sails and oars, two bronze cannon, and four or five small iron culverins, and so both returned to the city of Nombre de Dios, whence Captain Vera proceeded in a couple of days to Cartagena to his general.

As Captain Melo was preparing to leave Nombre de Dios for Acla again, General don Cristóbal de Erasso sent him the two English lads, with whom Captain Melo continued his voyage to the harbour of Acla, thence to proceed inland in hopes to accomplish something.

His party being so small—about sixty men, twenty having been added to those he had—we have small expectation of his doing anything, for his men are few and the whole coast is in arms, and many English escaped of those whom the captain and soldiers who came from there reported, for they now say that more than thirty men remained in the bush, the bravest and the leaders of them all, who may be expected to sell their lives dear.

And we do not know whether other corsairs have joined them since, of the many who are always to be found off this coast.

This situation demands immediate remedy, for the road is open from one ocean to the other, and it is short, and known to these English.

And although many and diverse times we have asked and begged this royal *Audiencia* and its president to do so, they have not seen fit to remedy it; they content themselves with what measures have been taken and consider that they have expended enough from the royal treasury. Wherefore this council and city are in such tribulation that their fears are greater now than they were on the first day, because previously these traitors advanced blindly, but now there is not a port, an island, a village they do not know, out of which

may arise grave damage to this realm and to that of Peru. We understand that these gentlemen of the royal *Audiencia* are not inclined to spend more of his majesty's revenues, or, if any, so little that it will be of no effect, (p. 2) so that the war will come to an end at the time when it is most necessary to continue it.

To wait for his majesty to provide will take a long time, because between now and the fleet's arrival a year or almost a year must elapse, and the present opportunity, which is great, will be lost; God forbid that meanwhile any irremediable misfortune occur. Nor do we know that even then his majesty will deign to provide!

We believe that unless resistance be offered (both now and also in the future) the land will be abandoned by most of its settlers, for they will not continue to live in such alarm and danger.

Now, while it is the winter season, is a very good juncture in which to press the war, for the maize crop is ready to destroy as well as the banana groves. For our men to raze these and leave them without subsistence is the most effective warfare which can be waged upon the *cimarrones*. At the present time they cannot conceal these food-stuffs, for the crops are not ripe; in summer they can, if it be only 20,000 faneagues of maize, which they can secrete in the bush where not a thousand men can find it.

Further, in these rains, the negroes leave a trail in the mud wherever they go, and cannot avoid doing so; nor can they travel by the rivers, for they are swollen. In the summer they can so travel, and leave no trail.

In addition to which, at this season the English and the negroes cannot live except under shelter in huts, because of the heavy rains. In the summer time, they can find hiding-places everywhere, even though they be many more in number than they are.

Again, they are not so well armed as they will be in a year hence, if now, promptly, war could be waged on them. And a thousand more advantages would be gained by promptitude. A thousand disadvantages will be entailed by delay. A hun-



dred soldiers operating on this side, if they went now—and many good men are available—and the sixty who went out along the Atlantic coast—would have great effect, God willing.

We entreat your excellency to order a proper course to be taken in the matter of necessary expenditure, since it is so important to the service of God, Our Lord, and of his majesty, that this realm be not ruined or these traitors permitted to sow their evil sect in these new lands because proper expenditure was not made at a juncture when such great damage could be prevented. And since your excellency is in all things so magnanimous and liberal and powerful to compass the welfare of these kingdoms, let your excellency observe the grievous need for remedy against these traitorous enemies of our holy Catholic faith, which has much to fear from their evil design. This is one of the most difficult and serious affairs which have arisen in all the Indies. It must not be under-estimated in consideration of our present petitions to your excellency, by whose hand these enemies are to be crushed out and finished. Wherein his majesty, as a Christian king, defender of our holy Catholic faith, will deem himself well served, and will approve the expenditure of money employed in the prosecution of so just a war.

Furthermore, yesterday, which was Corpus Christi, news reached this city that a captain named Pedro de la Cruz (who has committed most of the robberies at the mouth of the Chagre River and on the Veragua coast, and, they say, has eighty Frenchmen, Lutherans, in his company) has made a settlement at Boca del Drago, eight leagues from the Desaguadero de Nicaragua, and is wintering there, in order in due season to continue these robberies and do whatever other damage may be possible to him. None of the frigates which navigate between Cartagena and Veragua and the Desaguadero escape him. (p. 3)

To-day, which is June 7, a letter from the governor at Veragua reached this city to the effect that certain corsair launches arrived at the river of Concepción de Veragua and attempted to ascend, but desisted when they realised that their presence was known. He says that a man from Con-

cepción went out to see what was happening, and on the beach found hanging a resident of the place who had left a short time before in a frigate, and on the same beach another man in irons.

This latter stated that the men in the said launches were Gascons, and expected reinforcements; and that on the Veragua coast they captured a frigate belonging to a resident of that place with thirty armed men aboard, bound for Cartagena, all of whom they killed.

He states that they also took another frigate belonging to the governor of Nicaragua and killed all whom they found on board it, and that they are at present off the port of Veragua waiting to join the rest of their company to enter the gulf of Veragua<sup>1</sup>. The governor says he is sending relief. It is a great pity, to see how beset this realm is in every quarter!

If these enemies unite, they will place this realm in serious difficulty and danger, unless the remedy be provided which we hope from your excellency's hand, according as we have requested, from whom we anticipate an order that without further delay such expenditure be made as the necessity demands.

The inhabitants of the city of Nombre de Dios are suffering from a serious shortage of food, because most of their supply is brought in from outside. Since enemies capture the frigates which come up from Tolu and Cartagena, no others dare risk it. As a matter of fact, vessels are so few that there is scarcely anybody to engage in that traffic. In this city we are inconvenienced by lack of wheaten flour and are using maize, the price of which is three *pesos* the faneague, because the English seized more than 1500 faneagues which were arriving for this city's supply and would have made up the scarcity of wheaten flour. All these matters bring hardship upon the people and they are thoroughly dissatisfied. Our Lord remedy the situation, for He is able to do so.

May He preserve the very excellent person of your excellency in increase of greater estate as we, your excellency's servants, desire.

Panama, June 7, 1577.

(Rubric)...

<sup>1</sup> Mosquito Gulf.

## Document No. 46<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Loarte to [the Viceroy of Peru],  
Panama, June 8, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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*Most Excellent Sir*

By Campo's ship, in which went Francisco de los Rios and the soldiers your excellency ordered to be sent by the advice-boat, I reported to your excellency on events in the war on the corsairs up to that time. At the last moment, when the ship was on the point of sailing from Perico, I wrote to your excellency of the news I had of what had been accomplished by a captain I sent along the Atlantic shore.

This was, as I wrote your excellency, that this captain found the launches and artillery which these corsairs had left there, and because of differences he had with Captain Gabriel de Vera, who was patrolling that coast with some of the galleons, they proceeded together to Nombre de Dios that I might determine how far each was in the right. Having heard both, I declared that the booty belonged half to each, because both had laboured to find it; in which decision they acquiesced.

Don Miguel de Erasso having returned thither from Cartagena, the general restored the English lads of whom he took possession, and, having strengthened himself with reinforcements and supplies, the captain again set out to accomplish the mission on which I had sent him to the region about Acla, where I trust that he will achieve results.

Even if it be only to prevent more corsairs from entering (for they will not dare to enter while he is there), this will still be much. As soon as what he may accomplish there is known, what to do will be plain; and nothing then seen to be

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, simple copy.

desirable but will be faced and carried through, with God's help.

I say this because as soon as the good news of the victory had grown cool, everybody began to demand that another expedition be sent up the river where the corsairs were found, the pretext being that some English were left alive and might get together and again come out upon the Pacific.

Although it is true that twenty of the wounded escaped (not thirty, as some people have sought to make out), they were left unarmed—having not a knife, not a weapon, not an harquebus, bow nor arrows—and without subsistence, tar, cordage, nails or tools. All this was captured and taken from them—even the medicines they had for their treatment. Among people as (p. 2) unstable as the negroes, I have no doubt but they will either have died of their wounds or have been killed by the blacks, or have been destroyed by the country itself, which is equal to it, especially since the launches, sails and cordage, which would have served for their escape, were seized. For these reasons it has not seemed to me necessary to make further expenditure, now, of his majesty's monies on unnecessary expeditions.

What would be uselessly spent now I prefer to save for the spring. If by then his majesty has not issued further orders, it seems to me it will be necessary to protect that pass when the treasure begins to come down to the fleet. For it is logical to suppose that the corsairs will sally forth then, and not now, when they would find nothing afloat on the whole Pacific, nor is anything of value loaded aboard the ships until the fleet comes again, of the movements of which the corsairs are as well informed as we are.

It is quite true that although Pedro de Ortega accomplished much in the campaign he led against the English, he lost perhaps the best occasion which will present itself in many a year, for the negro village he stormed consisted of more than eighty large houses and others smaller, and he found there a large store of supplies; and given the short notice they had to save themselves, the women and children and less active negroes of its population could not have got a league

from the place in their flight. Near this village, within five or six leagues, there were three or four other negro villages. Had he made a stay in that village, from there he might very well have sent officers and men to various places, a measure by which he would have done those negroes notable damage, for they were all unprepared, considering themselves safe. This he ought to have done since in my instructions to him, particularly in one paragraph, I ordered him so to do, and not to return to report on events, even though he had attained complete victory over the enemies.

All which did not suffice to detain him, so anxious was he to go to Spain to press his demands for advancement. What he had accomplished—since it was much—induced me to refrain from saddening him by reproving him for what he left undone, although naturally I regretted the detriment involved in the loss of this opportunity, which, if God please, will be recovered on another occasion.

By order of the general, Don Cristóbal, Don Miguel de Erasso, vice-admiral of the galleons, remained behind to defend this coast, with a galleon, two frigates and a launch. Don Cristóbal wrote me from Cartagena on the day he left for Havana, that from there he would send back two more galleons. I place little reliance on Don Miguel's protection, because I have seen of what small effect was the whole armada in all the time it lay at Nombre de Dios and Cartagena. I am glad to say that (nuisance that he is!) he had now betaken himself from here to Acla.

After he had gone I had word from Don Luis de Cordoba, governor of Veragua, that (p. 3) two corsair launches had attempted to enter at La Concepción, but, realizing that they were discovered, had withdrawn to the bar and on the way had captured two residents of Veragua, of whom they hanged one; the other was found, in irons. This latter reported that these were new-comers and seemed to be Gascons.

He says that near Cartagena they took a frigate of the armada patrolling the Acla coast, which Captain Gabriel de Vera had sent for subsistence with thirty soldiers, all of whom these corsairs killed. He states that they had seized also a

bark belonging to the governor of Nicaragua and Costa Rica and killed those found on board it. This killing is a new development in these corsairs, and therefore has given me something to ponder.

What the governor of Veragua asked was sent, and I have no doubt that, being on the alert, they will be able to defend that city, because its position is naturally strong and a large force will not suffice to take it, unless by reason of gross carelessness.

What I fear is for Nombre de Dios, which is isolated, with easy entrance to its harbour, and since yesterday, when I received the news, I have had troops ready to go to its relief. God help us, we shall never lack alarms!

By way of Nicaragua, furthermore, news has arrived that other corsairs are quite permanently settled at the place called Bocas del Drago, in the Desaguadero, in the jurisdiction of the governor of Costa Rica. I suspect that these are not others, but the same who were recently off Veragua. The governor of those provinces is said to have made ready to fall upon them.

Of all this I have sent advices to Don Miguel de Erasso, and charged him to proceed immediately to drive these corsairs hence. God grant that he do something of some profit!

From all these things your excellency can deduce what quietude accrues to me, and ease for the improvement of my health; but since God so ordains, there is nothing to do but face it....

From Panama, June 8, 1577.

Most excellent sir

Your excellency's

Doctor Loarte....

## Document No. 47<sup>1</sup>

[Domingo Felix<sup>2</sup> to Francisco de Recio<sup>3</sup>,  
Cartagena, July 15, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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*Very Illustrious Sir*

...Now there is off this coast an Englishman with two frigates and two launches, who is leaving not a thing along this shore. He captured Judge Mora, who was on board a frigate from Tolu, and Francisco de Alva<sup>4</sup> with him. The judge arranged for his own ransom, and Francisco de Alva was held until the more valuable prisoner could be disposed of. The ransom was slow in forthcoming, and they made sail and carried him with them. It is supposed that (p. 2) they will have killed him, because two of their Englishmen were seized ashore.

All four sails appeared in sight of this town when Don Miguel de Erasso was here, and he put to sea next day in search of them. He returned at nightfall of that same day. If he had kept after them one day more he would have taken them; they would not have escaped him. Four days later he sailed on an easterly course. They say he is leaving in order not to face Pedro Menéndez Marqués. He is taking with him all the money there was here, with which to supply himself wherever he may go....

Cartagena, July 15, 1577.

Very Illustrious Sir

[Your honour's servant who] kisses your honour's hands.

Domingo Felix....

<sup>1</sup> *Al. de I.* 2-5-1 20 (32), *Patronato* 265, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> A prominent burgher; he held municipal office.

<sup>3</sup> This communication is addressed to Francisco de Recio as "governor of the island of Cuba." Captain Francisco Carreño had just been commissioned to succeed Don Gabriel de Montalvo in that office. The Recios were, however, an important family in Havana.

<sup>4</sup> The *escribano*, notary or clerk.

## Document No. 48<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown,  
Panama, July 28, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

Because of the despatches which he received from your majesty's *Audiencia* of Panama and for other causes which moved him, in conformity with the *Audiencia* of Los Reyes<sup>2</sup> and with the opinion of other ministers and servitors of your majesty, Don Francisco de Toledo, your majesty's viceroy of Peru, commissioned me his deputy captain-general over 150 men, most of them volunteers, equipped at their own expense to serve your majesty, assigning me as camp-master Captain Pedro de Arana, who has served your majesty in many other posts (and rendered good account of them). He provided me with two armed vessels and authority to take over two brigantines on the coast. He supplied artillery and munitions and subsistence (not only for these troops but also for the Main).

His orders to me were to make war by land and sea upon the English Lutherans who with great audacity had crossed from the Atlantic to the Pacific and built a launch in which they seized the Pearl Islands, near Panama, and took a ship coming down from Quito with more than a hundred thousand *pesos* in gold belonging to your majesty's treasury and to private persons. They stole also a large quantity of powder and food-stuffs. Further, he ordered me to chastise the *cimarrones* who had received and aided the English. In addition to which he bade me with all diligence to find three ships which he had despatched (before he heard the news) with your majesty's treasure (because it was very considerable)

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> At Lima.



and to bring them together and escort them under my protection to the Main.

I left from Callao, port of the city of Lima, whither the viceroy came in person to clear me, on May 6, of '77.

In Puerto Viejo I picked up two brigantines and came on, following the coast as far as Cape San Francisco, near the Gulf of San Miguel, where I met a ship sailing from Panama to Peru and received a letter from the president, only, in which he said that in Holy Week Pedro de Ortega, who had gone out as captain in search of the English, had dispersed and killed nearly all of them, and recovered the booty; and that he thought whatever captain might be coming to the relief might turn back, unless he had express orders from the viceroy to the contrary.

Because I have orders to make war on the said *cimarrones* I decided to continue my voyage; and also because some persons on board that ship told me that although it was stated that the English had been killed, it was certainly known that the captain and most of his men (including the most important among them) remained at large, and had not been pursued, there having been lost a great opportunity to exterminate them and to (p. 2) make peace with most of the *cimarrones*. Since they were terrorized by the defeat of the English and by the sudden appearance of the Spaniards in their villages (the whereabouts of which was not previously known), this could have been readily accomplished, or many of them could have been killed, their women and children captured, and their stores and subsistence seized.

I determined to continue to Panama, appreciating that it was greatly to the service of God, Our Lord, and to your majesty's and in accordance with the viceroy's orders for me to do so, considering also that the cost of the expedition had already been expended upon it by your majesty's royal treasury and by private persons who accompanied me.

I arrived here on June 20 and presented myself before your majesty's royal *Audiencia* with petition that I be admitted to the use and exercise of the said commission to carry into effect the intentions of your majesty's viceroy and any orders

which the *Audiencia* might give me. In the presence of the judges, the president showed himself to be offended by the commission I brought, but three days later they met in deliberation and answered that, for reasons which they set forth, I would be permitted to act under my commission as captain, and they ordered me to proceed to Vallano within ten days, where the English are, with the *cimarrones*.

From what captured negroes say and what was learned by Luis García de Melo, the captain whom the president sent by way of Acla to seize the English launches, who with his party came out upon the Pacific side, it appears that the English who survived are thirty or forty in number. Among them are the captain and leaders of the expedition.

It seems that the president opposed receiving me, declaring that to him alone and not to the viceroy of Peru appertained the exercise of powers inherent in the offices of governor and captain-general in this realm of Tierra Firme, whereas it is clear that your majesty appoints the viceroy of Peru and in addition to this appointment issues to him a separate appointment and commission as captain-general, whereas the president of this *Audiencia* is commissioned governor only, and not captain-general, of this realm.

I have not been permitted freely to exercise the commission I carry, as will appear from the evidence I enclose herewith, and I have suggested to certain of the president's associate judges that it would be better if two militia captains, whom in different directions they are sending out on this same campaign, should go in one body with me under a single command (reasons for which I exhibited in a memorial, also enclosed). Not only have they not deigned to hear me, but, further, they have refused to furnish me with a copy of the proceedings. These I nevertheless had the industry to obtain, which will explain why they are not signed by the secretary in the case, but only by a notary who accompanies me.

Believing it to be important in God's and your majesty's services, and to the safety and quietude of your majesty's subjects and vassals, not to lose the present occasion to chastise and eliminate these English, lest they escape and

return in greater numbers, or receive reinforcements of other corsairs who, they say, are abroad on the Atlantic along the coasts of Veragua and Cartagena, doing damage there, I have determined to leave behind all these differences and difficulties, and go into the mountains in the winter time, although never in this country has a campaign been waged in this season, because of the hardship involved. I have determined to put into this undertaking all my ability and skill, in your majesty's service, as duty obliges me to do.

I am leaving in great fear lest I run short of subsistence, since I cannot carry a sufficient supply with me, for lack of slaves. The president will not support me, I fear, judging by the little assistance he has given me so far. It is desirable that he send me supplies by way of the southern Gulf of San Miguel, and the Rio Grande which there descends from the mountains, by which I shall enter; yet I hope that when your majesty's viceroy of Peru learns of what has occurred, he will come to my support with supplies from there. (p. 3) I will report on events and in the whole matter your majesty will provide for the best good of the royal service, whose greatness Our Lord preserve and prosper in His holy service, with increase of kingdoms and lordships as we, your majesty's servants and vassals, desire.

Panama, July 28, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servitor who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Diego de Frias Trejo (Rubric)....*

## Document No. 49<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Salcedo Nieto<sup>2</sup> to Juan Rubio<sup>3</sup>,  
Panama, August 4, 1577.]

(p. 1)

...†

*Very Magnificent Sir*

We have had news here that the English went to Veragua to ransom certain persons they had captured near Tolu, and that your honour and your honour's associates opposed it.

Certainly I am amazed to discover extraordinary inhumanity ruling there, for I do not know what law forbids delivering a Christian from the hands of infidels. Let us trust in God that no man who advised in this sense be guilty of any trading with the corsairs. Those who avoided doing so good a deed might fall into the evil-doing mentioned, although I consider the business men of that city to be very good Christians.

Another such contingency arising, your honour will not be of the said opinion, but will endeavour to ransom, and will ransom, such prisoners. This is one of the services most acceptable to Our Lord, for so to ransom them is not less than to remove them from the power of Turks...

Our Lord protect your honour's very magnificent person.

Panama, August 4, 1577.

Very Magnificent Sir

(Your honour's servant) kisses your honour's hands.

Doctor Salcedo Nieto...

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-39, Panama 29, 1 *pliego*, legalized copy.

<sup>2</sup> A judge of the *Audiencia*.

<sup>3</sup> *Alcalde ordinario* at Veragua.

## Document No. 50<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, September 5, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

Although by the fleet which left the harbour of Nombre de Dios on March 8 of this year, General Francisco de Luxan commanding, I reported fully to your majesty on all matters in this realm concerning which there was anything to be said, yet because in the war against the corsairs and *cimarrones* there are daily developments of which it is desirable that your majesty be informed, in order to take suitable measures, I have considered it advisable to send this despatch to Havana (trusting to luck) that it may be forwarded from there to your majesty by the first vessel sailing for those realms.

From the papers I sent by the fleet your majesty will already have seen how the English corsairs who crossed to the Pacific were dispersed and the booty taken from them, and how what they had stolen from the royal treasury was restored to your majesty and the balance to its respective owners—I refer to the hard metal and actual cash, for the rest is in deposit, and out of it your majesty's treasury is to be repaid the expenditure made on the campaign. These costs are levied proportionately among all whom these corsairs damaged and will not amount to one per cent. This satisfaction is due to your majesty out of the booty itself.

I also reported how from the prisoners taken it was learned that on the Atlantic coast, where they struck inland, these corsairs had left two launches and two pieces of bronze and other iron artillery, and a quantity of silver, all hidden; and how, since it was logical to suppose that the English who had escaped would immediately endeavour to make off in the launches, I sent a captain and sixty men forthwith to prevent their getting away, and to seize the launches and artillery.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1½ *pliegos*, original.

To show the way and indicate where these things were hidden this party carried along two English lads, boys who were taken prisoners.

I reported, further, how Don Cristóbal de Erasso took possession of these guides and sent them on board a galleon to Cartagena, despite which the captain continued on his way; and how, although he had no guides, he discovered the launches and artillery and a large store of cordage and sails, but could not find the silver.

After this Don Cristóbal de Erasso returned the guides which he had taken from him, but before he did so the English and the negroes who are aiding them had removed the silver. The place where it had been was found, opened; and also the trail of the party which had dug it up.

This captain and his party then set out for the village of the negroes who showed the English the pass, with the intention of punishing them, as I had ordered him to do. Although his advance was perceived, and on the march some of the English and negroes attacked him in situations which gave them great advantage, he repeatedly scattered them and eventually occupied the village, which had already been abandoned by its population.

This was a town of 217 large houses, which is big for a negro village, because many of them live in each house. He burned the village and destroyed extensive plantations and fruit trees they have for their maintenance. He killed two of the English and some of the leading negroes.

From others whom he captured he learned that immediately after Pedro Ortega scattered them, the English who escaped fled to this village and the king (as they call him) of the negroes assigned men to conduct them to the place where they had left their launches hidden. This was at the time that the captain was looking for them, and when they found that he had discovered them, they removed the silver and returned much downcast.

As a last resort, they had decided to build canoes, which are the trunks of trees (which grow large in this country) hollowed out, like a trough; they can navigate the sea and

rivers, and will bear sails. Of these canoes they had built eight, which could carry a hundred men, with the intention to come forth again upon the Pacific to capture a vessel which a certain resident had at an island there, with which to commit further robberies, as at first. These canoes were burned, and so another expedition, like the one just raised, was rendered unnecessary. Although the English are few, with the help of the negroes they could have done much damage.

This captain's enterprise was very important, for at least it is (p. 2) certain that these corsairs will not return to England with news to invite others to come to these parts which they have been visiting.

At this juncture there appeared on the Atlantic another corsair ship and two launches, also English by nationality, which took a frigate of the royal armada which, from the fleet under General don Cristóbal de Erasso's command, your majesty has detached for the protection of this coast. They threw over twenty-eight soldiers who were on board it, and, this accomplished, attacked the province of Veragua and brought it to a tight pinch. They hanged an inhabitant whom they caught.

They captured another frigate which was sailing for the Desaguadero laden with merchandise for Veragua, and from there returned towards Cartagena, where, in another frigate, they captured Licentiate Juan Rodriguez de Mora, former judge of this, your majesty's royal *Audiencia*, at present commissioned to the bench of the *Audiencia* of the New Kingdom [of Granada]. They thought at first to kill him, but afterwards ransomed him for a good sum in gold, as your majesty may see in full from the evidence and other documents which accompany this despatch.

Because all its food supplies are brought in by sea, none of the necessary subsistence being produced there, the province of Veragua has felt a serious shortage, so serious that they were on the point of sending elsewhere the negroes who work the mines, although I have tried to relieve them to the best of my ability. It would be very detrimental to all this realm

were those mines to be abandoned; furthermore, your majesty's royal fifths from there amount to more than 15,000 *pesos* gold per annum. And certainly they will be abandoned unless that coast is better protected than it has been heretofore, for the squadron of galleons might as well not exist. Until such time as your majesty may provide, order has been issued to find an overland route from the city of Nata, in this district, to the Veragua mines, by which sufficient supplies of meat and maize may be sent in, although this is not without some drawbacks, since by such a route the negroes who work the mines may escape and join the *cima-rrones* more readily than they could were no such trail opened. The matter will be considered from all sides and the best course will be followed.

As I reported to your majesty, as soon as I heard the English corsairs had crossed to the Pacific I informed the  
*iceroy.* viceroy of Peru, in order that any vessel coming down with plate belonging to your majesty and private individuals might advance cautiously, and, further, that he might order the ports of that realm to be on guard, and take other suitable measures. Presuming that there were not in this land forces enough to punish these corsairs' audacity, although he was informed concerning the party I had sent out, he despatched hither 120 men and a servitor of his, with commission as his deputy captain-general, ordering that the officers and troops that I had sent out should obey him. Aware that this party was being sent, the campaign being over, together with the news of the victory I wrote that it was needless for this officer to come here. I had consulted the *Audiencia* in the matter and the municipal council and other persons of experience. Although my letter reached them while they were still in a Peruvian port, they nevertheless came on.

This provision which Diego de Frias brought (he is the person whom the viceroy sent as his lieutenant-captain-general) seemed to this *Audiencia* to be somewhat exaggerated, both because it was executed in your majesty's name under your majesty's seal (the use of which it is not known your majesty permits to any except your majesty's royal *Audiencia*),



and also because it bids this royal *Audiencia* act in conformity with the viceroy's lieutenant, and comes accompanied by an order for expenditure from this royal treasury to be made without consultation with this *Audiencia* and the royal officials here.

I resented it particularly because, by a royal *cédula* which I found here, your majesty commits the government of this royal *Audiencia's* district to its president, then incumbent or succeeding to the office, and empowers him, alone, to govern as do the viceroys of Peru and New Spain. Although I was informed of another *cédula*, of date prior to this one, in which your majesty orders to be obeyed any *cédula* or provision which the viceroy may send here in matters of government, good management of your majesty's royal treasury, or war, nevertheless your majesty has not made him either governor or captain-general over this realm; wherefore it seemed to me that in sending here a lieutenant-general or other such commissioned officer he was exceeding the authority which your majesty conferred upon him. However, since it was not right because of conflicts of jurisdiction to neglect your majesty's royal service, inasmuch as some English remain in the bush (although as captives of the negroes and with no way open by which to escape), we in the *Audiencia* deemed it advisable to send this party under its captain to wage war on the negroes and corsairs who remained at large.

Affairs being in this state, certain writs were presented in the *Audiencia* on behalf of the viceroy, wherein he claimed complete jurisdiction over this realm, basing the claim anew on a certain paragraph of a despatch of your majesty's to this *Audiencia*, concerning which he says previous judges of this court had informed him. Immediately I had a search made (p. 3) for this despatch and could find only a copy of a paragraph of it in the possession of a notary, which I laid before the judges of this court, together with the papers which the viceroy sent, as well as the *cédula* concerning government, above mentioned, addressed to the president of this *Audiencia*, that they might determine which should be deemed effective. I submitted myself to their determination.

In this paragraph of the despatch it is stated that your majesty was sending instructions to be observed, and evidence showed that these instructions did not arrive with the despatch, or later, and even had they arrived, and had your majesty thereby formally committed this entire government to the viceroy, in the very paragraph itself exception is made of all orders emitted by the president incumbent of this *Audiencia*. This was interpreted to mean that the viceroy could not send here lieutenants or officers commissioned to act for him, nor do I believe it could be your majesty's intention to set a subordinate of the viceroy's, or any other individual he might send, above the authority of your majesty's president of this court. Therefore the judges ruled that until your majesty order otherwise, the government of this realm should vest in me, and to me they remitted the handling of the troops which the viceroy had sent.

I sent this party out with its captain, under the commission the viceroy had given him, permitting him to use it with respect to the soldiers he had brought with him. Because it was ordered that with forty more soldiers whom I added to their number, drawn from veterans in service here (without which addition the newcomers could accomplish nothing), these men should go inland by two routes, and two other captains with local troops should go also by two other routes, I merely ordered that Captain Diego de Frias should not command the officers or men whom I sent out.

At this juncture the soldiers from Peru began to quarrel among themselves and to disobey their orders from the viceroy, and to post placards announcing that they intended to revolt and rise against your majesty's service. Not content with the communications they threw in to me by a window, they actually posted them on the cathedral door, and investigation could not discover the author of them.

Afterwards I was informed that the lieutenant-general said that, once in the field, by force he would compel the captains I sent out to obey him.

After consultation with the *Audiencia*, to prevent all disturbance, I forbade one captain to go for the present; this was

the one who might have submitted. So finally these troops left for the field. If their accomplishments there are in proportion to the trouble they gave me here, your majesty will be well served.

With these men the viceroy sent 2000 fanegues of flour to be sold, the money to be expended in preparing them for the campaign, any further sum required to be supplied by your majesty's royal treasury here. What he sent is being spent according to his order. Any further expenditure will be considered by this *Audiencia* and the royal officials in conformity with your majesty's instructions covering the case.

One captain and party of those I sent out went without pay. The men of the other party (which is being sent to an advisable quarter) are going on pay and at your majesty's expense. Of all this your majesty may learn from the evidence and pertinent documents which will accompany this despatch<sup>1</sup>.

All this by way of entreating your majesty to make provision in two matters. First, to take measures to protect the Atlantic coast of this realm, to safeguard which, as I have said, the squadron of galleons is not effective; nor, I fear, will the galleys prove to be unless they have more desire to fight and less to seek illicit profit than have the men of the galleons. The second, and no less important, to determine clearly in respect to the government of this realm and the district of this royal *Audiencia*, because, as your majesty may order to be seen in the documents I send herewith, the viceroy claims that it appertains to him... (p. 4)....

...Panama, September 5, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant.

*Doctor Loarte* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> Not seen.

## Document No. 51<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, October 15, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

The new development in this realm in the matter of the appearance of English corsairs upon the Pacific here, in view of such considerable damage, incites me to remind your majesty how by the last fleet your majesty was informed (especially did I write then, as I write now, partly to meet the obligation of my office in your majesty's service, and I again stress the matter) that unless your majesty promptly ordered the Atlantic coast of this kingdom to be protected by rowing vessels and the establishment of settlements, not only was this province exposed to grave danger, but only with difficulty could even the province of Peru be preserved, the way thither being known to the enemy, by which he could so readily enter because of his alliance with the *cimarrones*, his friends. Although the victory with which God deigned to crown orders, issued by this, your majesty's royal *Audiencia*, was markedly important, as your majesty will have deduced, and it prevented greater damage which the enemy was planning, (p. 2) which would have resulted in irreparable loss, nevertheless it did not end the danger inherent in the constant presence of corsairs on those northern coasts, from which it is easy for them to cross to the Pacific.

Therefore—after having written to your majesty, and in prosecution of the war against the corsairs who after the first attack upon them remained scattered in the bush (it being now understood that they are nearly twenty in number, and include the leaders)—this royal *Audiencia* raised a force to

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1½ *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Judge of the *Audiencia*.

exterminate them in such manner that none shall escape, because of the damage which would ensue were any able to return home with information concerning this realm.

By way of the bay of Acla on the north coast, where they entered, a captain with seventy men was sent to cut off their exit and seize the ships they had there in which to depart. This enterprise was opportune, for a few days before the corsairs reached the coast, at the mouth of a river which empties into the sea, this captain and his party found two launches hidden under water, and in them a number of pieces of artillery, the weight of which had been used to sink them out of sight. The corsairs themselves presently repaired thither with the intention of returning to their native lands; and since their launches had been seized they had perforce to go back into the interior.

As a desperate recourse they again built canoes (which are small craft) in which once more to sally forth upon the Pacific. (p. 3) Comprehending their plan, some days after they had seized the launches this captain and his men went inland on the corsairs' trail to where they were, until they came out upon the Pacific (after four or five days' march, for from one sea to the other at this point the distance is not sixteen leagues). In the course of that march they had certain encounters with the English and negroes who lay in ambush for them, wherein they killed two Englishmen and wounded others. They themselves were uninjured, for the enemy is short of arms and munitions.

They also captured two negroes, from whom they obtained the foregoing information, and then found the canoes the English had built to return to the Pacific. These the soldiers demolished. They destroyed what plantings of maize and other food crops they could find (the negroes had all gone into hiding). Having located four of their villages and taken observations of the country and its quality, these soldiers returned by the Pacific to this city.

At this same time, which was mid-June, 160 soldiers, well equipped for war, arrived here under their captain-general, whom your majesty's viceroy of Peru sent as his lieutenant to

this realm's relief. In the middle of August these troops went into the bush in pursuit of the English and negroes.

Because your royal *Audiencia* was advised that the corsairs intended to descend by the Chagre River to the Atlantic coast and there seize some bark trading out of Nombre de Dios (p. 4) in which to return home, the court ordered the said captain and seventy men, who had returned from the bush, to proceed to the said Chagre River and Puerto Bello, to cut off their retreat. In this manner they are blocked in every direction, and divided, and this land protected by this measure, until such time as your majesty may deign to order what is to be done for its conservation and defence.

Although up to the present we have not heard the result of these undertakings or what these parties have accomplished, we are confident that this preparedness will prove fruitful.

In relation to the arrival of these troops from Peru, it has appeared that your majesty's viceroy of that realm undertakes to exercise command over this kingdom of Tierra Firme; your majesty's president of this royal *Audiencia* has met this situation by the exercise of authority invested in him, according to documentary evidence he submits. It seems that these disagreements would end if your majesty would order that there be issued suitable decisions, that the royal service may develop quietly towards its better good... (p. 5)...

...Panama, October 15, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servant who kisses your majesty's royal hands.

*Doctor Alonso Criado de Castylla (Rubric)...*

## Document No. 52<sup>1</sup>

[John Oxenham, deposition made at Ronconcholon<sup>2</sup> (Vallano),  
October 20, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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On the site of Ronconchalon, which is in Vallano, in the kingdom of Tierra Firme, in the Indies, in the Ocean Sea, on the twentieth day of the month of October, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-seven, the illustrious Señor Diego de Frias Trejo, captain-general's lieutenant for the most excellent Señor don Francisco de Toledo, for his majesty viceroy, governor and captain-general of Peru and Tierra Firme, having captured nine of the English corsairs here at large;

To inform himself of affairs, for the good of his majesty's service and for the successful conduct of this campaign, ordered to be brought before him the captain of the said English, and before me, Juan Rodriguez de Cepeda, his majesty's notary, to him put the following questions, one of the said nine Englishmen, who said he was called William Parcar<sup>3</sup> and speaks Castilian fairly well, acting as interpreter;

The said questions, with his answers to them, as obtained through the said interpreter, are as follows, after they had been urged to tell the truth.

Asked his name, and of what land and realm he is a native, and if he is in command of the English corsairs who crossed to the Pacific and are at present at large in this bush of Vallano;

He said that his name is John Oxenham<sup>4</sup>, and that he is an Englishman, native of the port of Plymouth; and that he is in command of the said English who crossed to the Pacific and are at present at large in this bush of Vallano.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 2 *pliegos*, attested copy.

<sup>2</sup> Variouslly spelled.

<sup>3</sup> Parker? See p. 177, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Juan Ocsnam" in the original. We have here, doubtless, almost verbatim, Oxenham's replies to direct questions put to him by Frias.

Asked what reason moved him and the other Englishmen whom he brought with him to leave their native land and realm and come to these parts and cross to the Pacific, and what purpose they had in doing so,

He said that Captain Francis<sup>1</sup>, Englishman, who sailed along these coasts of the Indies with another captain, a Frenchman, and returned to England, to the port of Plymouth, of which he was a native, told deponent that in this Vallano there were *cimarrones* rich in gold and silver, and he described the country, and said that he could barter to them whatever he might bring; and it was about two years ago that he told him this;

And deponent came with the intention of bartering to the said negroes much merchandize which he brought from England—cloths, hatchets, *machetes* and other things of different sorts—which he intended to barter for gold and silver, and so return rich to his own country;

And he left England on April 9th of last year, and when he reached this coast left his ship, which was of about a hundred tons burden, in a harbour this side of Cartagena, of which he does not know the name, and from that place brought away all the goods he had to barter, in a frigate which he had taken from some Spaniards who were on the way to Veragua, to whom he gave another vessel which he had brought from his country with the said ship;

As also he had brought in the ship the woodwork and equipment for two launches, already shaped and prepared, and there he set them up, nailed them together, and launched them, and in them and in the said frigate deponent came with his men and goods, sailing along the coast, and left the said hundred-ton ship at anchor in the aforesaid harbour, with three or four men in charge of her;

And as they proceeded along the coast, beside the Francisca River, near Nombre de Dios, they saw two negroes, *cimarrones*, who spoke with them, and they told them they were out of England with goods to barter (p. 2) and that they would trade these for gold and silver. The said negroes asked them

<sup>1</sup> Drake.



if Captain Francis was among them, and they answered no, only deponent, as captain of these Englishmen.

And the negroes said that if they would go to their village, there they would give them gold and silver for their goods.

And so the said negroes brought them to a port which the negroes called Xerenxeren River, which is on the north side, where they arrived on St Michael's day in September of the aforesaid year, and there they hid one launch, and left the frigate with some soldiers aboard her in the port.

In the other launch some soldiers went to bring the ship to that harbour, for, as has been said, they had left her in another port.

Forthwith, with twelve men, deponent set out with the said negroes to see their village, and the country, and to treat for the barter of his goods. They brought him to this site of Ronconcholon, which was then inhabited by many negroes, in their houses, forming a big village. As soon as he had arrived in this village and saw that the negroes had no gold or silver, he desired to return, but was here fourteen days.

During this time he heard that Spaniards had taken the frigate in which he had all his goods for barter, and his subsistence, and nine pieces of artillery, and the powder and munitions they had brought, his men having saved only one barrel of powder with which they fled to land. The Spaniards got twenty harquebuses which were ashore, but they saved another twenty; and they took also the swords and weapons they had in the said frigate, and they<sup>1</sup> were thus disarmed and discomfited.

Learning this, and seeing that he had no subsistence, or arms or munitions, with which to return to his own country in his ship, nor goods to trade to the negroes, as he had promised them, he remained quiet in the village and sent for his men.

The negroes proposed to deponent that if he wished them to provide him and his men with food, he should burn the ship which had now come up to the port of the said river Xerenxeren, and give them its iron and nails, and three

<sup>1</sup> The English.

hogsheads of salt which he had in it, and what else there was on board.

Seeing that he had no means to obtain subsistence, since, unless he burned the ship, the negroes were unwilling to provide it, but on the contrary, bade him depart, and if he burned the ship and gave them all the aforesaid, that they would supply him and conduct him to the Pacific, and aid him to take much gold and silver, provided he would kill all the Spaniards he captured, and would give them what negroes he might get, deponent was compelled by necessity to accept all these conditions, and ordered the ship to be burned and gave the negroes all the nails and iron of it, and the other things he had mentioned.

And they hid the other launch in the said river along with the first which they had hidden, and all came to this village of Ronconcholon, where they spent (p. 3) the past winter.

During this time they felled the timbers for the launch they built, with which they went down to the Pacific. With a saw which they set up with much labour and difficulty they constructed the said launch in Indios River, four or five leagues from this village, which is the river which passes through this village, going down stream.

Once built, they carried the launch as best they could down the river, carrying it over portages until they came out in Maize River, which was navigable.

Some negroes went from here with them, and others came out by the Piñas River, and they all met, being seven negroes and an Indian who was in their company, among those being Juan Vaquero, negro, captain over the negroes, and the others were not captains; and they said that these negroes and their captain went along to see that they killed whatever Christians they might meet.

There were fifty English with deponent, among whom were many youths and seamen, and second class seamen not fit for war.

*Those who left from England.* They were fifty-seven men in all when they set out from England, of whom seven had died, leaving the said fifty.

And so they went to the Pearl Islands, and there took a

Spaniard and his wife and children, whom they let go, along with other Spaniards, on Mancaneda island; and the soldiers took some clothing, and the negroes captured some blacks. Deponent does not know how many, nor what loot the soldiers got.

And some pearls and some objects of gold which were taken there, all were recovered by Pedro de Ortega at Piñas River.

They remained in the said islands fourteen or fifteen days, and sighted the bark from Quito which was coming down to Panama. They went out to it and took it, with all the gold and silver it carried, and they killed no person of those on board the bark.

With this booty they returned to Piñas River, where Pedro de Ortega arrived and routed them and recovered from them everything they had taken, and took their arms and munitions, and all that they had, and killed twelve Englishmen, and captured alive two boys and two youths, ship's youngers.

The twelve Englishmen killed were seamen and youngers and servants, for the soldiers who were there fled, as did the negroes, for they were all eating on the river bank, off their guard, when the said Pedro de Ortega arrived with his men and opened fire with harquebuses. It was then that the soldiers and the negroes fled, and the aforesaid twelve men were killed.

Deponent and some six or seven of the soldiers were farther up, five or six leagues from there, in a place now called (p. 4) Catalina, which is a negro village, whither Pedro de Ortega went after he had scattered those who were beside the river, and it was there that he killed three of the twelve men who died. The captain fled, with the rest who were there, and the said Pedro de Ortega took all the silver and gold and things they had, as aforesaid.

Asked if they brought any women and children from England, to settle in this land;

He said they brought no women, because they came with no other intention than the one he has stated.

Asked how much artillery they brought and if any remains to them, and how many harquebuses;

He said that, brass and iron, they brought eleven pieces of artillery and six small culverins, and that all were taken in the frigate; and that from England they brought forty harquebuses, of which twenty were taken and the other twenty remained to them, of which Pedro de Ortega got some, after which they had still eight, but no powder or shot. And of these, two were lost, two broke, and so they had four harquebuses, of which the camp-master took the two which were there when he captured deponent and those who were with him.

Asked if there was among them any captain other than deponent, he said no.

Asked if they have built, or endeavoured to build, any fort on the northern coast, and where, and how, he said that they have undertaken nothing of the sort.

Asked if they have sent any word to England or to France or other part, of their presence and experience in this country;

He said since they arrived here they have seen no English or French, nor written, or made any similar communication.

Asked if they expected to return with the fleet, or to remain on the sea coast, and what they intended to do in the Pacific;

He said that they had nothing to do with any fleet, for he came alone and that his intention was, after he had taken the Quito prize, to depart into his own country.

Asked whether, to come thence, he had any command, order or licence from his sovereign;

He said that the sovereign of England knew nothing of his coming.

Asked whether he expected any relief or support, or in his country made any arrangement with any person to send it to him, he answered no. (p. 5)

Asked who provided the ship in which he came and the people he brought, and with what licence he cleared, and how he got these people out of England;

He said that the ship was his, that he had bought it; and with his men he came to an understanding and signed them on for the voyage; and that no licence or permission of anybody was necessary, for these and more can depart out of

England without there being required more licence than their will to go.

Asked what plan deponent and the rest of the English had, after Pedro de Ortega routed them, or what they had considered and determined to do;

He said that the decision they reached was that, the negroes having agreed to lead them to a river emptying into the Pacific to which vessels come to load timber, there they would seize a vessel, and with its nails build another on the northern side in which to return to England. And on this deponent was resolved, seeking to carry out this plan, when the general and his forces arrived at this site.

This was the plan of deponent and twenty-one Englishmen with him. Eleven others, with another called Jacob Canoa, joined together and declared that they would go to the Chagre River, or sometimes they said to the Atlantic; and again they mentioned other destinations. These twelve Englishmen had withdrawn from deponent and the rest who were with him.

Asked the present whereabouts of the men missing of the twenty-two who were with deponent, and where the said Jacob Canoa and the eleven with him now are;

He replied that he does not know where they are, because the said Jacob Canoa and the rest, all of them, of both parties, were scattered in groups of six, or four, or eight, in different places, where there was food, and where they chose to be, like lost men.

Asked whether, since, as he has said, they intended to go to seize a vessel in a river emptying into the Pacific, these twenty-two Englishmen were together in one body, or not;

He replied that they were near each other, to get together when it should be time to set out for that purpose, and, further, the said Canoa and the rest were hereabouts. But when the general and his troops arrived, and they learned of his arrival, they all fled and hid themselves, each group for itself, and deponent does not know where they are at present, because they scattered, (p. 6) and deponent is of the opinion that many of them must be lost in the woods, fleeing, and will not be able to find their way out of the bush.

Asked how the negroes behaved towards them after they were dispersed;

He said that they treated them very badly, and would give them nothing to eat. They lived on bananas which they picked in the groves, and occasionally a kind-hearted negro gave them a little maize. But their leaders ordered them to give them nothing, because they had not killed the Spaniards whom they captured in the islands and aboard the Quito bark. He said that the negroes repeatedly reproached them with this, saying that deponent and his soldiers were to blame for their ruin, in that they would not kill the Spaniards, for, had they done so, they would not have followed them, nor defeated them. For which reason the negroes gave them no subsistence nor any article of clothing, and they were all naked, hungry and disarmed.

Asked if he knew where at present any negroes and their women and families may be found;

He answered that he does not know where they may be now, for they have all abandoned their villages and burned them. As soon as they learned that the general and his men had arrived in this region, they passed the word from one to the other with great diligence, and left their villages, and burned them, and went to hide in the bush in different directions. The negroes abandoned the village on the Piñas River, by the Spaniards called the village of Catalina, which is some four or five leagues from this site of Ronconcholon, fleeing from it as soon as they received news that the general had reached this site, which news very quickly reached them and the other villages, and so he does not know where the negroes are at the present time.

Deponent knows that the villages are abandoned, because he has seen some that are deserted, and because the negroes have told him that they have all been abandoned. They did not inform deponent concerning their flight, nor where they were hiding, in order, they said, that if any Englishman were captured he might not be able to betray them.

Ever since the general entered into this region, the English have feared the negroes as much as the Spaniards, and

deponent believes and understands that if at present the negroes meet any English in the bush or in their villages now, the English will have cause to fear (p. 7) greatly and will be in great danger, for even before the general came the negroes had cast them off, bidding them begone, for they did not wish the Spaniards to come in search of them.

What he has said is the truth.

The general, through the said interpreter, urged and admonished the said captain to consider whether he had hidden anything of the truth concerning matters about which he had been questioned, or withheld anything that he knows in these matters, since if he tells and declares the truth his life may be spared, but if he tries to deceive no pity will be shown him and he will be punished according to his crime.

The captain asserted that in everything concerning which he has been questioned he has spoken the truth, and nothing will appear to the contrary.

The general signed, and the said captain, and the interpreter, and witnesses present when the said deposition was made: Don Pablo de Guzman, Gerónimo Mexia, *sargento mayor*.

Diego de Frias Trejo

John Oxenham<sup>1</sup>

William [     ]<sup>2</sup>

Before me, Juan Rodriguez de Cepeda, his majesty's notary.

I, Juan Rodriguez de Cepeda, his majesty's notary, before whom this deposition was made, fixed here my mark [there is a notarial mark] in witness of the truth.

*Juan Rodriguez de Cepeda*, his majesty's notary.

(Rubric). No dues.

<sup>1</sup> "Oxnansam" in the original, itself a copy.

<sup>2</sup> "Pavter" in the original. Porter? Parker?

## Document No. 53<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown,  
Vallano, October 21, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

From Panama, as soon as I reached that place, I reported my arrival in that city to your majesty, and how, upon receipt of advices from the royal *Audiencia* of this realm and its president concerning the English who crossed to the Pacific and the damage which they had done in the Pearl Islands, with all possible speed the viceroy of Peru, Don Francisco de Toledo, sent me with 150 soldiers and two armed vessels, artillery and orders to pick up two brigantines in the port of Manta and equip them with men and arms, which I did. I reported also that, acting on the authority vested in him as captain-general and governor of this realm, he had made me his deputy captain-general, and I also sent your majesty the commission I hold, along with the other writs and documents which accumulated in Panama in relation to this appointment. I advised your majesty of what happened between the president and me in respect to jurisdiction, and of the attitude the president assumed, his conduct, the obstacles he placed in my way, and the opportunities he gave me to fail to wage this campaign against the English corsairs who remained at large.

Although the president and some who shared his view sought to defeat the enterprise by declaring that Pedro de Ortega had killed most of the English and that the few who survived were the worst of the lot, that the English captain received two harquebus wounds, and had presumably died since, I endeavoured to learn the truth concerning what had been done, and from some who were present at the time and others who had informed themselves, I learned that the facts

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 2 *pliegos*, original.



were quite otherwise, and so invariably insisted that I would go into the interior as soon as possible, although the winter was against me, and we were then at the height of that season.

In this I heartened myself by keeping the service of God, Our Lord, and your majesty constantly before me, and the fact that the viceroy had (p. 2) sent me on this mission and charged me with the task, and placed confidence in me; and so I wrote to your majesty briefly in another letter. I knew that the president would support me but poorly with vessels and soldiers acquainted with the country, negro carriers, subsistence and things necessary for the enterprise, as in effect he did, and even more poorly than I anticipated.

In spite of all this, I left the port of Perico on August 8, and sailed until the 16th, when I arrived off the mouths of two rivers which empty into the Pacific, which is where the English emerged. These rivers are the Indios and the Bonbas, which leads to a place they call San Miguel Headquarters<sup>1</sup>.

I had determined to go up the Indios River with half my forces to the village of Catalina, which is as far as Pedro de Ortega got, near the Piñas River, where the Capes negroes have their base; and to send the rest of the men under the campmaster by the other river to Camp San Miguel, where they should land and proceed to occupy Ronconcholon, which is the principal headquarters for all Vallano and the most important place the negroes had, from which I am writing this despatch. This could not be done because the river was so swollen that it was unnavigable.

I think your majesty will have been informed that it was always my intention to commence this undertaking without waiting for summer, because to do so was to the advantage of

<sup>1</sup> Most of the streams named in these documents cannot be certainly identified, but a careful study of a large number of maps of various dates, kindly laid before me by the courteous officials of the Map Room of the British Museum, seems to show that the Indios was the Chucunaque River. The Piñas may have been the Tupisca or the Chico (or some more northerly tributary of the Chucunaque). Catalina village was doubtless somewhere near Yavisa or above it. Near the juncture of the Chucunaque and the Tuyra rivers, just below Santa Maria, is a place called *El Real Viejo* (Old Base or headquarters) and it is logical to deduce that this was Frias' *real*, or Camp San Miguel. Apparently Ronconcholon was a little farther up the Tuyra.

your majesty's service. In view of my determination, the president ordered me and certain captains and persons who had on other occasions made war on these negroes, to meet in council of war with him and the judges and the crown prosecutor, to treat of means successfully to accomplish this undertaking. In that council it was resolved that the advance should be made in four columns: I and my men to occupy Ronconcholon and the village of Catalina; the president to send out two other captains with as many more soldiers, one by the Atlantic and port of Acla, and the other by way of Puerto Bello, in such fashion that we might surround these English and negroes, and by all falling upon them at one time beat them out, so that if they fled from one party, they would run into another, and so they could be destroyed more quickly and with less difficulty.

I immediately entered on the execution of the part assigned to me, and to occupy the two points which fell to me I at once set out on the campaign. Although so many days have passed since I left Panama and I am here, in the interior, the president has never sent the captain and troops which he agreed to send to Acla on the Atlantic coast. This has made the enterprise more laborious and difficult, and has prevented it from having more and greater results.

I landed at San Miguel Headquarters on August 20, with all the forces and soldiers I had, and there left thirty men with some sick to guard the supplies I brought with me and to hold that point and port as the base from which the troops (p. 3) campaigning in these mountains could be conveniently supported.

With one column of the remaining troops I set out to attack this place of Ronconcholon; with the other I sent the camp-master to cross by land to the Piñas River, to the village of Catalina. These are the two places it was agreed that I should occupy.

Very speedily and in silence I approached this place of Ronconcholon, which I found abandoned and burned. Only two houses remained, in which were three or four negroes and some English, who became aware of my presence, because

they were on the alert, and because only a short time before there had crossed this way from the Atlantic side to the Pacific one Captain Melo, whom the president sent out with seventy or eighty men. The negroes and English had sallied out and fought him in certain passes, wherefore he quickly left the country, and with his men arrived in Panama before I left that place.

Assuming that the location of this village was known, and presuming that the Spaniards would return to it, the negroes burned it and decided to scatter through the mountains in camps and not assemble into villages, in order not to be found.

And so they are hidden so carefully and take such precautions that although some, whom I have captured with great difficulty, have conducted me to many of their camps, so clever are the negroes that if any of their number fails to return a single night, they infer that he has been seized and flee to another place in order that the prisoner may not be able to lead the Spaniards to them; and so in none of these camps or villages have I found a single black. Instead, I find everything abandoned and the negroes gone.

When I reached this place and the English fled who were here, I was unable to capture any, although I followed their trail as best I could over rivers and mountains. God deigned, however, to permit that, fleeing from me and I in pursuit, these English should run into the campmaster, over fifteen leagues from here, and he captured the captain of the English, named John Oxenham<sup>1</sup>, and seven others.

I captured the master of the ship in which they came, who is held in high esteem among them. In all, they are nine, whom I have in custody under close guard. They say there were thirty-four of them, alive, the best soldiers of them all; not counting two or three who had died. Those whom Pedro de Ortega killed and captured were the servants who were with the launch.

According to the captain, in his deposition which I have taken, he and twenty-one English were on the point of departing to go to the Pacific a second time, to a river of which

<sup>1</sup> "Ocsnan," in the original; a good phonetic version.

he does not know the name, but only that the negroes were to take him there, which is frequented by vessels which load timber. It is deduced that this is the Chepo River. They intended at that place to take some bark, and obtain from it nails and iron, with which (p. 4) to return to the Atlantic coast and there build a vessel in which to get back to their own country. This they might have done, accomplishing their purpose, such are the facilities and the loneliness of that sea and the land to be traversed, had not their path been blocked. But God was pleased by my coming to clip the thread and undo their design. Had my arrival been delayed until spring, it might not have met with such marked success. These twenty-two English were in the vicinity of this headquarters. They fled at my approach, scattered and lost track of each other, in such manner that so far it has been impossible to find or capture more than these nine. Two more have been seen, who escaped.

They say the other twelve English had joined together with another named Jacob Canoa, and that they intended to make their way to the Chagre River, or again they say to the Atlantic, and so withdrew and separated from the rest, but were hereabouts, like the others. When I came up they, too, fled and hid, as your majesty may see at greater length and with other details by the captain's deposition, enclosed<sup>1</sup>.

I have covered much ground, and been as far as the Atlantic coast at the place where these English struck inland, to see if they had reappeared there, but I have found no trace of them. It is supposed they are hidden in these mountains and come out to gather bananas, which is the food and sustenance of the *cimarrones* as well as theirs. There are admirable banana groves here, which it will be impossible to destroy, because the nature of the plant is such that if one tree is cut down four or five new plants spring up and bear fruit in a year.

I hope in God that I shall lay hands on all the English and destroy these negroes, and that He will direct it, since it is a business undertaken for the good of His holy service; and

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 52.

so I will persist in my endeavour to achieve the end, even to the point of losing this life, and many, if I had them, in your majesty's service.

Although at the present moment I am in great need of shoes for my men, because the heavy winter rains, the swamps and mud have worn out those we had, I am expecting a ship to come from Peru to Panama by which I understand that the viceroy will supply me with everything necessary, and so I am confident that your majesty will be well served by this campaign... (p. 7)...<sup>1</sup>.

...from this camp of Rinconcholon, October 21, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Diego de Frias Trejo* (Rubric).

With this despatch to your majesty I send a soldier named Alonso Ordoñez, who has served your majesty in this campaign with much valour and good will, as well as in Florida (p. 8) and elsewhere. He goes solely to carry this despatch to your majesty and to bring the reply that your majesty may deign to order to be made. I entreat your majesty to deign to order the answer to be given to him when it shall be time to send it.

*Diego de Frias Trejo* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> In omitted portions of this despatch he complains of the president, enters into the disagreement between that official and the viceroy, and for himself asks promotion and pay.

## Document No. 54<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Loarte to the Crown, Panama, October 24, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

In another despatch which on the 5th of September of this present year I wrote to your majesty, and which I presume will go forward with this one, I reported to your majesty on events to that date and especially on the question which had arisen with respect to the jurisdiction which your majesty's viceroy of Peru, Don Francisco de Toledo, seeks to exercise over this realm, and the controversy which had arisen out of the matter, and this *Audiencia's* opinion on the point; concerning all which I sent your majesty the papers and evidence duly authenticated, wherein will appear the truth of the occurrence.

What has happened since is that, before the viceroy knew what had been done in this respect—for, although I have sent him as many other copies of documents in the case as I have to your majesty, and written him my view frankly, he had not yet received these, but only word that the troops that he was sending here had been informed of the situation while they were still in a Peruvian port, and that in the opinion of the municipal council, since the corsairs who were on the Pacific had been dispersed, their coming was unnecessary—he so resented this that he wrote to this *Audiencia* and to other private persons with much feeling, complaining of me; and, according to what I am told by a person of his own household, the principal cause of this resentment is that by my order the corsairs were so dispersed, without waiting for the troops that he was sending to do it. And that because of this he is so angered against me that he will endeavour to get me into your majesty's ill-favour. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (32), Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

As for the war on the *cimarrones*, the 120 soldiers the viceroy sent from Peru, together with the rest I furnished, are in the field and so far it is not known that they have accomplished anything.

The troops I sent out from this city by another route have captured a negro village and are encamped in it and from there as a base are making incursions. I hope in God that both parties may accomplish results—at least teach the negroes not to dare hereafter to show corsairs the way into the interior.

Those who came down from Peru, with the additional men I furnished, are in the quarter through which the negroes brought the corsairs down to the Pacific. The other party (p. 2) is out against the negroes who are accustomed to show the corsairs the route to the road which leads from this city to Nombre de Dios. As a result I believe both bands of negroes will be taught a lesson.

The true remedy, for the safety of this realm, as I have previously written to your majesty, is to provide galleys for this coast. And now I say frigates and launches, or galleys and launches—either—will suffice, if their commander and the galleys themselves be under the jurisdiction of your majesty's representative in this realm; otherwise, neither will suffice unless your majesty be lucky enough to provide for them a commanding officer who shall do his duty better than his predecessors have done.

*Nota bene.  
Consider  
what should  
be done.*

As a matter of fact none of them have had men enough on board to fight three cats, nor have they sought the enemy out, to fight, nor are the men on board (much fewer in number than your majesty commands) paid for what service they do render. So it all comes down to illicit profits and to taking what they want on pretext that it is for the squadron, and then going to sell the goods where they will bring the best price. If they were under the jurisdiction of this administration they would be inspected, crews and armament, and given orders what to do according as needs presented themselves. It seems that then they might be of some use. Since they are to be paid from here, your majesty might well provide some

control here by inspection. This is my opinion. Your majesty will issue whatever orders may be best for the service.

...<sup>1</sup>...Panama, October 24, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant.

*Doctor Loarte* (Rubric)....

<sup>1</sup> He asks leave to go to Spain, on ground of ill-health.



## Document No. 55<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda to the Crown,  
Panama, October 26, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...As soon as the fleet had left from the city of Nombre de Dios this *Audiencia* sent a captain named Luis García de Melo with seventy men to the river by which the English went inland, to hunt for the launches and artillery, and the rest, which they had left hidden, as was learned from the depositions made by the English lads.

Arrived at the river, they found there a ship of your majesty's royal armada, Gabriel de Vera commanding, and they proceeded up stream together. God granted that they should find the launches and artillery and cordage and sails, which they divided between them.

The troops from this city went inland in accordance with their instructions and fell upon the negro village called Ronconcholon, which they burned. In one ambushade which the negroes (p. 2) laid for them at the ford of a river our men killed an Englishman who was with the blacks, and from two captured negroes they learned that the negroes were trained by the English, had learned military tactics, and posted guards and sentinels.

From there this captain advanced, laying waste the land, to the Pacific, and in one river found seven canoes which the English had built, and burned them. Whereupon he came out into the Gulf of San Miguel which is on this Pacific side, and thence to this city to report on what had been done.

Similarly, a few days after the fleet had sailed, certain English corsairs—according to the report received, they were as many as seventy—near the Desaguadero seized two frigates which were sailing from Nombre de Dios to Nicaragua. They

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1½ *pliegos*, original.

castrated two Franciscan friars they found on board, as a result of which one died at the Desaguadero, and I have had word from Nicaragua that the other died also on arrival there.

The captain of these corsairs was the nephew of another on whom in Seville the holy office executed justice, and they even say upon him, too, in effigy; and so he said that he had come to avenge this and to recover the value of what had been confiscated from him.

From the Desaguadero he proceeded to Veragua, expecting to take the place off its guard; but seeing that it was on the alert, he put to sea. A few days later he returned and landed fifty men, whose approach was also observed, seeing which they retired and on the beach left hanging a resident of the place whom they had captured and had brought with them, whose name was Negrete.

From there they went to Tolu. Having accomplished a certain commission of your majesty's, the Licentiate Juan Rodriguez de Mora, formerly your majesty's judge of this *Audiencia* and now of the *Audiencia* of the New Kingdom of Granada, on setting out for Cartagena was by them captured along with the other persons travelling in his company. They were ransomed for certain monies, and the corsairs set them ashore at Tolu, and learning that your majesty's royal armada was in Cartagena, they returned to Veragua, whither the armada pursued them. Unfortunately, they escaped. They have not been seen since this, and have probably returned home, unless they are wintering on these coasts in order to harass them again when the fleet comes, as they are wont to do.

(p.3) Of the frigates captured, one belonged to your majesty's governor of Nicaragua, who has made ready to undertake the exploration and settlement of the Guaimi; according to what he writes me, he will sail during this month of October with two frigates and two launches and a brigantine, and ninety men, well equipped. First, he intends to hunt down this Englishman. He has word that those who committed this robbery are encamped at Bocas del Drago, where they have erected huts and have a great quantity of wine and linens

which they have stolen. God will grant that he find the Englishman and punish him and prevent him from doing further damage. If it fall out thus, I will advise your majesty.

I have previously written your majesty how, two days before Saint John's day, two ships came in from Peru with 150 soldiers, whom your majesty's viceroy sent as a reinforcement against the English as soon as he heard the news that they had entered the Pacific. As general in command of them came a servant of his called Diego de Frias Trejo, and as campmaster one Pedro de Arana, a Biscayan. They are all fine troops.

Over the question whether they were to proceed on the orders issued by the viceroy or according to that of the president of this *Audiencia*, there was considerable discussion, as I have related at greater length and sent the evidence, as has also your majesty's president, in order that your majesty may express your majesty's royal pleasure in this matter, that it may be respected.

Finally, in conformity with the instructions they had to the effect that if the English were gone or dead they should proceed to chastise the negroes who had favoured them and shown them in through their territory, and by resolutions reached in council with the captain and other officers acquainted with the terrain, as to what was advisable, they were ordered to proceed to chastise the said negroes and to finish scattering the English who had remained.

And so they left this city two days after Saint James's day, with orders to divide into two parties, one (p. 4) to go inland by San Miguel Headquarters and the other by the river where the battle occurred. Because the stream was swollen they could not go up it, and so the whole expedition went inland by the way of the said camp, and there separated. By land the general proceeded to the village where the fight occurred, which is called Catalina, and the campmaster went to Ronconcholon. Since they started inland no news has been received as to what they may have accomplished, and at present the launch they took from the English and another bark laden with munitions and subsistence are ready to convey these to

them as soon as it shall be learned how it goes with them. God will grant that it fall out as we all desire for the good of your majesty's service and the quietude of these realms.

This *Audiencia* has sent the captain who returned from Vallano to Puerto Bello. This is another establishment of the negroes, and according to the resolutions reached and advices obtained, it appears to be very important to hold it, both that the negroes there may not unite with those of Vallano and to cut off the retreat of the English in that direction. So far, neither has any news been received from him, except that the captain sent for munitions, which were sent to him immediately. He reported only that as he went inland he had had an encounter in which he had killed seven or eight negroes, whereupon they had retired into the mountains, and were nowhere to be seen. God will grant that these measures quiet the country, and will punish and chastise these negroes who have occasioned such disturbance, although, as at other times I have indicated, the real remedy for all this situation is that your majesty deign to send galleys to keep these coasts clear... (p. 5)...<sup>1</sup>.

...Panama, October 26, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servant who kisses your majesty's royal hands and feet.

*Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda* (Rubric)...

<sup>1</sup> To protect Spaniards and overawe the negroes, the galleys to be under the jurisdiction of the president of the *Audiencia*.

## Document No. 56<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown,  
Panama, October 31, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Royal Majesty*

...reliable news was received to-day that they captured eight English alive, and particularly the captain who escaped wounded from the encounter had with them when the booty in gold and silver, which they had stolen, was recovered. When these were taken many more fled; exclusive of these now captured it is understood they are, in all, twenty-two. They cannot get away, because they are scattered, disordered, without food or arms, and despised by the negroes, who, recognizing what damage and disturbance have come upon them because of these English, have already withdrawn their company from them.

(p. 2) The negroes, too, have retired into the mountains, into strongholds and carefully hidden places, although some were taken who are useful as tracers and guides, and through their industry a sum of 2000 ducats was found, which the English had secreted in the bush.

This is a good beginning from which to anticipate that the extirpation of these corsairs, which seems likely, and the damage the negroes will receive in the punishment preparing for them, may possibly serve as a lesson so that next time they will not venture to admit the enemy; and if for the future your majesty will provide the remedy anticipated, Our Lord will graciously conserve these realms, Who with long life preserve your majesty happy years with eternal aggrandizement.

Panama, October 31, 1577.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servant who kisses your majesty's royal hands.

*Doctor Alonso Criado de Castylla (Rubric)...*

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

## Document No. 57<sup>1</sup>

[Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Cartagena, November 21, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

...For eighteen months now an Englishman has been making himself at home on this coast, with sixty comrades in two frigates armed and equipped with artillery, and of twenty vessels and frigates there were engaged in the coast-wise trade, he has taken twelve or fourteen, one of these being that in which the Licentiate Juan Rodriguez de Mora, your majesty's judge of *Audiencia*, was coming from the town of Tolu to this city, after executing your majesty's commission there. They took him, his notary and sheriff, and the papers he had accumulated.

Three days before this happened, four sails were seen at sea, by the look-out I have set in this city. I informed Don Miguel de Erasso that he might go out to encounter them. He is the person whom Don Cristóbal de Erasso left to patrol this coast with two frigates and a galleon. He sailed that same night and remained at sea until noon next day, when, having sighted no sail, he returned, saying there was nothing there and that these were false alarms sounded to get him out of the harbour. Next day came news that the English had captured the said Juan Rodriguez de Mora.

Informed of this, I provided some harquebusiers and residents of Tolu, who were in this city, to go to defend that town. When they arrived the English had set the said Juan Rodriguez de Mora and his sheriff ashore at Tolu, for the inhabitants of Tolu had (p. 2) given the English certain pieces of wrought silver. Because they thought him a rich man, they carried the notary along with them to Veragua to be ransomed.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 72-4-6, Santa Fé 37, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> His majesty's governor at Cartagena.

And when they had ransomed him there, Don Miguel de Erasso with his ships came down upon them. Recognizing him, the English sent off a launch in which was the said notary, with all the papers. The English got away from them.

Don Miguel took the said notary and the papers and with his ships came to anchor at the town of Tolu, where on behalf of the judge the papers were demanded of him. He did not wish to give them over... (p. 3)...<sup>1</sup>.

...Cartagena, November 21, 1577.

Your Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's loyal servant kisses your majesty's royal feet and hands.

*Pedro Fernandez de Busto* (Rubric)...

<sup>1</sup> He goes into the details of the ensuing quarrel.

## Document No. 58<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown,  
Vallano, December 7, 1577.]

(p. 1)

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### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

About a month ago I wrote to your majesty, reporting my arrival and the commencement of this Vallano campaign against the English corsairs and the *cimarrones* who are here; I reported that I had captured the captain and eight other English and some negroes, and transmitted the news I had of the other English who were hidden in the bush. I told how difficult it is to pursue them, because of the roughness of the country and poor and scanty food, and because the president of the *Audiencia* at Panama furnished me with few negro carriers. Such carriers are vitally necessary to this enterprise. All which your majesty will see in full by the letter and pertinent documents which I sent to Panama by a special messenger, who is to carry the despatch forward aboard the first vessel he can find sailing by whatever route.

What has occurred since upon which to report to your majesty is that among many sallies and sorties I have made into this bush in search of the English and negroes, one such was the longest and most laborious, in the course of which, led by guides I carried along for the purpose, I visited the Chongone, Bainque, Baño, Gallinazo and Bogota rivers and many lesser streams and gulches, and every other place in that region where it could be suspected they might be found. Finally God granted that, led by a negro I caught in a banana grove and by another, a leader of them, who with his wife surrendered himself to me, I should capture four English who were in a certain camp, and I came upon other encampments of negroes and took another twenty head, large and small, and some others fled. With these prisoners I returned to the headquarters at Ronconcholon.

So that at present I have thirteen English prisoners and many negroes and negresses and boys and girls, and I am informed that in that region no English remain. Towards the Atlantic there are, however, another fourteen or fifteen of

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original.



them with one Jacob Canoa, who is their leader. They are on the Vallano river, whither I am now setting out in pursuit of them with guides I am carrying with me to show the way.

I am also informed concerning two or three more English, and certain negro villages, to all of which I mean to attend with the good will and perseverance I have always exercised in your (p. 2) majesty's service, and I trust in God to effect much since the commencement has been so excellent, although the men are tired and worn down because of our serious lack of carriers, especially now that most of the few the president did furnish us have run off to Panama. With the few who remain I made this latest capture and shall set out for the Vallano river.

But if from Panama the president does not send me carriers and other things of which I have advised him, imperatively necessary for the prosecution of this campaign, the men will not be able to endure such excessive labour, although they are all very willing and devoted to your majesty's service, and they and I will do our duty as far as we are able. Of everything accomplished and of events as they occur I will continue to report to your majesty, whose royal person God, Our Lord, prosper and preserve many years with increase of more realms and dominions as we, your majesty's servants, desire.

From Ronconcholon, a place in Vallano, on the Main, December 7, 1577.

Herewith goes forward a copy of a letter<sup>1</sup> which the municipal council of Panama wrote to the viceroy of Peru, asking him for reinforcement and relief against these English and negroes, and of the reply he made to it. Your majesty should see these, for from them appears the necessity in which this land was, and the desire the viceroy has to serve your majesty. There goes forward also a letter from Antonio Baptista Salazar, secretary to the viceroy, written me from Lima, wherein your majesty will see what news there is there.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Diego de Frias Trejo* (Rubric) . . .

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 45? The others, not seen.

## Document No. 59<sup>1</sup>

[Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown,  
Trujillo, December 29, 1577.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...The first day of the month of August of this year, Francisco de Acles<sup>2</sup>, an English captain with two ships (with sails and oars) and sixty men and much artillery, arrived at the island of La Guanaja. He took that island and occupied it. The island and the natives of it are part of your majesty's royal patrimony; they fled to the bush. The enemy took the village and sacked it, and fortified himself in it. The said village is close to the shore.

I was advised by the natives of the island, and, immediately, leaving a suitable force in this city and having first consulted with the municipal authorities, with a *zabra* and a brigantine I proceeded to the said island, which is two leagues from this city. I was not seen by the enemy.

I landed on the north, and the enemy was on the south side, and so with much difficulty I crossed the island, and with twenty-three men (I was unable to take more with me), on Saturday, the 17th of the said month, at dawn, with a "Hail, Mary!" I attacked and gave them battle. Captain Francisco de Acles was killed in the fight, along with twelve gentlemen, his henchmen, and many others were wounded. The village was bathed in blood.

So heavy was the fire of their artillery from their ships that they robbed us of the victory. Those of them who (p. 2) could manage it, re-embarked and, so defeated, made sail in the direction of Havana, and this land was left free of this enemy, and the island and its natives quiet, and in their homes.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-39 (70), Guatemala 39, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> John Barker. Cf. Document No. 37.

All which I send to your royal majesty proven before this city's municipal authority, as well as how I brought the head of the said Captain Acles, and the twelve heads of his companions, and a hand, all, I brought before the municipal authorities of this city, which said heads and hand I entreat your majesty to grant to me as an addition to my arms, wherein I shall receive benefit and favour<sup>1</sup>.

I send these facts proven in legal form at greater length, and evidence that one Englishman who fled on the island at the time of the rout was hanged; and also a missive which the Englishman wrote to one Diego, governor of the said island, cacique, and lord of the place. Therefore in this despatch I relate no more, since Captain Juan Melgarejo, its bearer, was an eye-witness of these events. He is a good soldier, and therefore at the time of the battle I gave him command of half the men, that in your majesty's name he should be captain over them. Your majesty may give him credence, for he will report on the state of this city and of this land....

...Trujillo, December 29, 1577.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble vassal and least servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Captain Diego Lopez (Rubric)...*

<sup>1</sup> "...the president of the *Audiencia* assigned to him a parcel of Indians, which fell vacant in the city of Olancho..."—Licentiate Valverde and others to the crown, in *A. de I.* 1-3-23/14, No. 13, *Patronato* 76.

## Document No. 60<sup>1</sup>

[Captain Diego Lopez to the Crown,  
Trujillo, January 7, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

I had written and reported to your majesty, by the bearer, Captain Juan Melgarejo, whom I am sending with news of events in this land, according as your majesty commands me to do. He embarked in the port of this city in a frigate bound for the city of Havana, with the intention of proceeding thence on board the despatch-boat, in order that your majesty might be the more promptly advised, but by adverse weather he was driven to the island of Meletierra.

There he found an English frigate, with two launches (which they had just taken from the natives of the island) and some Spaniards, who were prisoners there. The English had attacked them by night.

The English took a ship belonging to a resident of this city, to which they set fire. They looted the neighbouring island of Ruatan, and took a bark from its natives, and captured them. They, also, had sailed from this city. The enemy did not dare to attack the frigate, aboard which the bearer was, although it carried but ten men, because they were afraid, believing it to be a ship of war.

Instead, they abandoned the said port and town, let their prisoners go free, and fled.

Apparently, this is one of the frigates I defeated at the island of La Guanaja, and if in this city I had means and strength, I would easily put an end to the damage these people are inflicting.

For the love of Our Lord, may your majesty have compassion on this, your majesty's land, as I have supplicated, sending me the wherewithal to remedy this situation.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-39 (72), Guatemala 39, 1 *piego*, original.

Our Lord preserve and with greater realms increase your sacred Catholic royal majesty.

Trujillo, January 7, 1578.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servitor kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Captain Diego Lopez* (Rubric)....

## Document No. 61<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown, Headquarters San Miguel de Vallano, February 18, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

I have reported to your majesty at length on the events of this Vallano campaign up to December 7 last, when I wrote the latest letters, which for lack of a vessel are, I think, detained at Panama and will go forward together with this.

What has occurred since then, worthy of report, is that I continued to make sorties in many other quarters, in which I was occupied for some time, undergoing great hardship and want. God was pleased that this should not be in vain.

At a river called the Indios<sup>2</sup> we saw six English in a canoe, who with their packs were travelling upstream, intending to abandon their canoe and cross to the Atlantic and there find means to escape. When they discovered our presence they left their canoe and fled into the bush, and we could not find their trail because, in this bush, if a man be lost from sight he cannot be found or followed with any certainty.

While we were looking for them, and when we had lost hope of finding them, after three days, following a trail we found on another river, ten leagues from where they had fled, I came upon them, hidden in the bush. I fell upon them at night and captured five. One of them is the most (p. 2) important man among all who came over, because he is the most astute and sagacious of them all, and acted as their pilot and interpreter. He is a very clever pilot, and speaks Spanish and other languages well; they call him Chalona, and by this name he is well known and famous. I have, then, eighteen English prisoners at the present time.

This accomplished, I fell upon a negro encampment, to

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 179, *ante*, note 1.

which I was guided by a sentry I had taken. I captured some negroes and negresses and from there, led by this English pilot, I proceeded to the Acla coast on the Atlantic seaboard, to see if the fifteen English who are missing had appeared there. Having arrived there, I found no sign that they had been there, or gone that far.

I am sure that they are at the island of Piñas, or at Yguanas, which are near the coast, towards Nombre de Dios, because within sight of these islands I some days ago found the trail and night encampment of these fifteen English, as I wrote your majesty. Moreover, this pilot Chalona says that Jacob Canoa, leader of these fifteen, had previously been at Piñas island with him<sup>1</sup>, where there is an abundance of game and fish and other subsistence, and that he cannot be anywhere else. These islands are very near the coast and they have not a vessel of a sort in which to go farther. They will have made their way to these islands on some raft or canoe they constructed.

I have reported this to the royal *Audiencia* and president at Panama, that a party may be sent after them; and I have informed Don Miguel de Erasso, of your majesty's armada, in order that he too may take some measures, seeing that I cannot, having no bark or vessel for the purpose. I think that if he acts promptly these English cannot escape. In this bush none have remained, nor news of any.

Negroes I captured later tell me they killed the one who escaped when I took the five, for the blacks are now mortal enemies of the English, because of (p. 3) the chastisement which on their account has been meted out to them. Therefore I have not been able to find this man, or trace of him, much as I have looked for him.

From Acla I returned, beating up the country in other districts, and went to the Manta River, and to the Piñas River, where I heard that certain negroes had settled. I took a prisoner who led me to the village, where I captured certain negroes, negresses and Indian women who were with them. The rest fled into the bush. I burned the village and destroyed their food supplies. I spent some days trying to pick up

<sup>1</sup> I.e., with Chalona.

trails, and following up paths and short-cuts through the bush, without finding, or obtaining news of, any other settlement or encampment in all Vallano.

Wherefore, some forty odd days after I left the camp at Ronconcholon, I returned to this headquarters at San Miguel four days ago, where I am, with all my men, awaiting despatches from the viceroy, to whom I have continually reported my movements during this campaign, that he might order me how to proceed.

If the president of Panama had sent a captain with a troop to the Acla coast when I set out on this campaign, as it was agreed and determined should be done, these fifteen English would not have escaped, nor would further measures and labour now be necessary to find them.

I have done all I could to serve your majesty in this campaign, and carried it to the point where not an Englishman remains in this bush except as a prisoner, nor a negro except he be a fugitive in the wilds or hidden in some fastness. Well punished are these blacks, and sorry they ever let the English pass!

I have forty odd head of prisoners, negroes and negresses, large and small; some eight or ten others died.

My men are so worn out and sick that they cannot continue this campaign longer, nor do I feel that anything more can be done at present, because, as I say, (p. 4) I find no trail, hear no news, and see no sign of any negro village. All the surviving blacks are hidden in the bush, without a village or fixed sleeping-place. If any news should be received I will act upon it as I should, as I always have done, and I will keep your majesty fully informed, whose royal person Our Lord preserve many years with increase of more realms and dominions, as we, your majesty's vassals and servants, desire.

From Headquarters San Miguel del Vallano, February 18, 1578.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Diego de Frias Trejo (Rubric). . .*



## Document No. 62<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Gonzalo Núñez de la Cerda to the Crown,  
Panama, February 22, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...the troops sent by your majesty's viceroy of Peru have to this date captured eighteen English, among them the captain and the ship's master who brought them hither, as I have reported, and also Chalona, who is the principal corsair of all, and the one, it is understood, who induced them to come to these parts, and led them into the bush.

They write that they are pursuing another captain called Mosen Canoa, who with fourteen companions had withdrawn from the rest, to try to find a way out. If they get him they will have finished off all this evil seed; unless he be dead they cannot fail to find him.

Moreover, they have captured twenty-two blacks, negroes and negresses, and this, and the state of alarm in which they are keeping them, have brought punishment home to these *cimarrones*, who do not show themselves as they did formerly. Therefore this country rests quieter than heretofore.

Further, the corsairs who have usually come in the wake of other fleets have not followed on the skirts of this one<sup>2</sup>, or at least to this date none has appeared. Nevertheless, the country is so fearful that the pack-trains still come and go under convoy of soldiers and armed guards, which entails no little cost. This would cease if your majesty would grant the favour of the galleys which have been asked for. Until galleys are provided there can be no quietude or peace sufficiently certain to warrant omission of this expense.

(p. 2) The corsair I reported to your majesty, who made an

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Juan de Velasco de Barrio arrived with the 1578 Tierra Firme fleet in mid-January of that year.

attempt on Veragua, has not been seen further. His name was never learned, only that he was English and that the holy office in the city of Seville took proceedings against an uncle of his. The governor of Nicaragua, who went out in pursuit of him, seeing that he could not find him, returned to the exploration of the Guaimi and has made a settlement, as he will advise.

A few days before the fleet arrived this royal *Audiencia* had news by letters from your majesty's governor at Cartagena and from the lieutenant-general of your majesty's galleons, that three large corsair ships had fallen on Rio de la Hacha and taken the town and seized the residents. Because of this news and of a warning received from your majesty by way of Santo Domingo, bidding these coasts to be on their guard against corsairs who were preparing to come hither, orders were sent to the captain whom this *Audiencia* had out against the negroes of Puerto Bello to proceed with what men he had to the city of Nombre de Dios to protect that place, and to remain there, in its garrison.

The soldiers from Peru were ordered to proceed to the Atlantic seaboard, to Acla Bay, to bar the corsairs' entrance should they appear there, and prevent communication with the negroes. They were ordered to report to this *Audiencia* in the matter.

They all obeyed their orders, and the men sent to Nombre de Dios remained on duty there until it was learned that the fleet was at Cartagena, when they were discharged.

The corsairs did not appear on these coasts and afterwards it was learned that the damage done was not as much as was at first stated. . . (p. 3) . . .

... Panama, February 22, '78

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least servant kisses your majesty's feet and hands.

*Licentiate Gonzalo Nuñez de la Cerda* (Rubric) . . .

## Document No. 63<sup>1</sup>

[Carlos de Maluenda<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, February 23, 1578.]

(p. 1)

+

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

By Captain Juan de Soto's merchant vessel I reported to your majesty that General Diego de Frias with the men from Peru had in Vallano found and captured nine of thirty-three Englishmen whom Pedro de Ortega left in the bush.

And although the roughness of the country made it hard to find the rest, in the winter season, the desire to serve your majesty has been and is powerful enough to override all these difficulties, since it is plain how greatly to the advantage of God's service it is to dissipate from the heart of this country even the shadow of Lutherans, who had thus opened the way by which to disquiet your majesty's realms. Had they been able to strike any permanent root, as they sought to do, it would have been most difficult to weed them out, and even at great expenditure they could not have been totally wiped out in many years. But God, favouring His cause and your majesty's, has deigned to direct this campaign, which will reach the end designed as by His Divine hand.

For in mid-December of last year General Diego de Frias captured four more English and as many as twenty-four (p. 2) head of blacks, and two more surrendered, who are showing him their passes and trails in the mountains.

And lately, about twenty days ago, they took five other English, among them Chalona, who enabled the rest to cross to the Pacific, because he is a man of great understanding, an admirable seaman, and very sagacious. He has promised to lead the general to where he will find the eleven Englishmen who are missing and try to lay hands on Juan Vaquero,

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

captain of the negroes, who is not less active and astute than Chalona in every variety of wickedness.

The general set out on the first of this month in pursuit of those who remain at large. I hope in His mercy that God will deign to give him victory, as He has so far vouchsafed it to him in your majesty's royal service.

Inasmuch as by this your majesty's *Audiencia* your majesty will be advised of the rest, especially by Doctor de Castilla, your majesty's judge, to whom this campaign owes much in your majesty's service, because he has earnestly favoured the troops engaged in it and by his prudence and courage obviated opposition, Our Lord preserve and prosper the sacred Catholic royal person of your majesty through infinite years with increase of many kingdoms and dominions.

Panama, February 23, 1578.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble vassal,

*Carlos de Maluenda* (Rubric)...

## Document No. 64<sup>1</sup>

[Don Pedro Fernandez de Busto to the Crown,  
Cartagena, March 13, 1578.]

(p. 1)

+

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

In two other letters which I have sent your majesty (one by way of Santo Domingo and the other in a vessel I despatched to your majesty, to carry certain mail which Don Francisco de Toledo, viceroy of Peru, sent here to be very promptly forwarded to your majesty) I have reported on everything here and especially on the troops which the viceroy of Peru sent against the *cimarrones* and English of Acla, and on the results they were accomplishing. In addition to what I have written I have had advice and letters from Tierra Firme in which they write me that they have had a third encounter with the English and negroes, in which they killed a number of negroes and captured alive five more English and twenty blacks, among these a negress whom that nation considered its queen. She revealed certain secrets concerning the country, and the villages of the other nations, and told where the other English are. Some nineteen of them are still at large.

I am certain that by the time of this writing they will all have been taken, and also (so much have these troops accomplished) that in a short time they will have scattered and destroyed the *cimarrones*. I have sought to inform your majesty of this, to save expense which your majesty might incur there in measures looking to the chastisement of these people... (p. 2)...

Off this coast at present no corsair appears... (p. 3)...

...Cartagena, March 13, 1578.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's vassal and servant kisses your majesty's feet and hands.

*Pedro Fernandez de Busto* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 72-4-6, Santa Fé 37, 1 pliego, original.

## Document No. 65<sup>1</sup>

[Alonso de Contreras Guevara<sup>2</sup> to the Crown, San Juan  
de Puerto de Caballos, April 12, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

...About six months ago two vessels carrying English Lutherans arrived at La Guanaja, which is an island within this jurisdiction, and landed at a village of Indians and took the subsistence these had, and remained there, overhauling, in such manner that there was time for the Indians to send word to the city of Trujillo, (p. 2) whence Captain Diego Lopez set out with twenty men. He holds the office of my lieutenant in that city.

He surprised them at dawn, killing more than ten of their men, without losing any of his. They withdrew to their ships, believing his force to be larger than it was.

From one who was taken alive it was learned that they were sixty men in all, and that they had done much damage, and killed many people along the coast of Tierra Firme and Veragua, and were very rich in pearls, gold and silver, and that they had kept close inshore to provide themselves with food [at] that island.

About fifty days ago, being in Comayagua, I had news that English corsairs were off this coast near this Puerto de Caballos, and had been seen going towards Golfo Dulce, and had chased a little coasting vessel or two. Furthermore, an Indian escaped from them, who also said that they had tortured him to make him take them to Golfo Dulce.

Wherefore, I sent order to Diego Martin de Angulo, my lieutenant in this Puerto de Caballos, to go or send out after them a small ship which is here from the Canaries, and two other small launches belonging to the ships, with what force

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 63-6-39 (67), Guatemala 39, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Contreras Guevara had arrived on August 22, 1577, to succeed Herrera as governor.

he could raise. He obeyed with promptitude and diligence, and sent fifty men under a captain.

By land I also advised the *Audiencia*, that it might protect Golfo Dulce, and the warning arrived in good time, had they cared to make the most of it; but they must have thought it an untrue rumour, and so sent for the purpose Don Juan de Céspedes, *alcalde mayor* of Vera Paz, to proceed with what Indians he could assemble, to defend the Golfo. As if all the Indians of that province, together, were capable of resisting four corsairs armed with harquebuses!

Finally, the corsair decided to go up the strait, and on the way encountered a vessel out of this port, from which he took 8000 testoons and other cargo it was carrying for Spain; he went on as far as the houses, and at four harquebus shots which he let fly, Don Juan and the Indians made for the bush. The corsairs took all that they wanted, and could carry off. God granted that they did not set fire to the rest, as they usually do; it would have been a serious detriment to these provinces.

As they came out at the mouth, to the sea, our ship met them and gave them chase, and came alongside them three or four times. Because the English was a rowing craft, ours were never able to board and the small launches could not come up. They fell far behind in this pursuit. And so the English went in among the shoals where our ship dared not follow.

In this pursuit six or seven English were killed (they were observed to throw the dead overboard); and others were wounded. There were no casualties on our side.

A skiff with seven Englishmen and part of the spoils from the gulf was taken, from whom it was learned that these were the same corsairs who were at La Guanaja, and that, when they were on the way home, after they left La Guanaja, near Cape San Anton, one of their two small vessels capsized in bad weather, with all the wealth they had stolen. Of fifty English left after the Guanaja affair, fifteen were drowned then, and the thirty-five remaining decided to return to this coast to steal more. Because of information they had from

the Indians, they determined to go up to Golfo Dulce. So that now only eighteen are left.

Of the seven who were captured, six were hanged. They died like Christians, and the ones who were not baptized (p. 3) asked for baptism. The seventh, because he was a lad and could speak Spanish, was allowed to appeal to the *Audiencia*, to which court he was sent under close guard.

In view of the damage which, as time went on, those who remained at large might do, I decided again to arm the ship along with two swift launches. I went out in search of them. I ran along this coast and part of the islands of Yucatan, being occupied twenty days in this undertaking, and would have continued, but to do so would have delayed these ships (which are now on their way) in continuance of their voyage. Inasmuch as I could find no trace, I resolved to return, and three days ago I arrived in this port, where I was engaged in getting these ships off. God aiding, they will leave here in five days.

It is very necessary that your majesty should relieve this coast. Since it may not be with force of men and ships, your majesty may issue a royal order that, in an emergency as pressing as this, the royal officials shall from the royal treasury supply funds to the amount that your majesty may determine, to a maximum of 400 *pesos*, for it is enough that we draw so small a salary here, without pawning ourselves in these cases, although all is well employed, and with it life itself, in your majesty's royal service....

...San Juan de Puerto de Caballos, April 12, 1578.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Humble vassal and servant of your majesty, who kisses your majesty's feet and royal hands,

*Alonso de Contreras Guevara* (Rubric)....



## Document No. 66<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Alonso Criado de Castilla to the Crown,  
Panama, May 12, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

...In the matter of the English corsairs who penetrated into the Pacific, concerning which your majesty will have received a detailed account by many routes, the latest news I wrote your majesty (or could be furnished by others) was to the effect that the troops which your majesty's viceroy of Peru sent down to relieve us (in company with experienced soldiers whom this *Audiencia* added to their number) had (after the first expedition had recovered the plunder and dispersed them) succeeded in capturing their captain with eight of his men.

And a few days after this they took another nine, so that so far they have gathered in eighteen English, and as many as forty blacks.

This affair has entailed great labour, because, from the first of last August up to the beginning of April of this year, the troops were out in the bush, hunting these English and the *cimarrones* in every direction. Although so few blacks were taken, in comparison with the multitude of them, they occasioned no less difficulty than the English, for they do not await the attack; their defence is to flee and to hide in the remotest, most secret fastnesses of the mountains, abandoning their villages, some of which they burned as soon as they knew that our men were approaching. Our troops destroyed the negroes' huts, their plantations and fruit trees, which furnished their subsistence, and sought to do them damage in every quarter.

Some of these blacks came in of their own accord, and by their guidance and the information concerning what was

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 2 *pliegos*, original, duplicated.

going on in the bush, which they furnished to the captain and his men at different times, they were enabled to make the said captures. And because, completely to round up all the English, there were lacking fifteen of a different gang which had separated from these (in disagreement), the soldiers followed their trail to the Atlantic seaboard, where they found traces, or so it seemed, that they had set out by sea for the islands adjacent to that coast, fleeing from danger.

This can be more readily understood from the account which the Englishmen and the negro prisoners give.

Being so advised, this your majesty's royal *Audiencia* ordered a launch and frigate, with well-armed men, to be despatched on the northern coast to reconnoitre those islands and the shore where it was suspected the English might have taken refuge. That this order might be carried out at the least cost, Juan de Velasco de Barrio, general of this fleet, was informed, who responded very willingly, providing men and munitions; so also was the lieutenant-general of your majesty's royal armada advised.

So far the result of this search is that, having reconnoitred the said islands and coast, they found not a sign there to indicate that the English had been there; wherefore it is deduced that they have been drowned at sea. They must have set out on rafts, for they could have no other craft in which to trust themselves to undertake a longer navigation, since those they left hidden on that coast when they went (p. 2) inland were found and seized.

In order to be further assured that these English had not remained in the bush, the captain and his men very diligently searched every place and part where they might be, and could find no trail, except of the *cimarrones*, who, fugitive and hard pressed by our men, were dodging from place to place. They caught none, and, considering their exertions vain, believing that only one of the English corsairs (who escaped at the last capture) could be supposed to remain at large in the bush, the captain and troops returned to this city with all their prisoners.

Here, after their depositions had been taken (which we send

your majesty), the said English were executed, except four whom your majesty's viceroy of Peru asked to be sent to him. Among these, in addition to the captain, an important prisoner was one called Chalona, by whose industry and advice these English crossed to the Pacific, for he is a friend of the negroes, a seaman very expert in navigating the Atlantic, thoroughly acquainted with this country. He had a part in the robberies which the corsairs committed, years back, on the Nombre de Dios highway and at the Venta de Chagre.

Although the chastisement which these *cimarrones* have received constitutes some present ground to believe that they will not so readily admit other corsairs to the bush (since they had already withdrawn their favour from these and cast them off, as authors of their losses), nevertheless the fact that the way across from sea to sea is now so well known makes it necessary to stand constantly upon the defensive. Therefore, until your majesty order us otherwise, we will take care at the least possible cost to keep some force on patrol along this Pacific seaboard in that part and along those rivers where the English came down to the sea, who shall reconnoitre the land, and keep the *cimarrones* aware that we are not off our guard. The launch taken from the English is a very appropriate and light vessel in which to patrol the coast and give prompt warning to the land.

And lest any Englishman who may have remained at large might possibly dare to go down to the harbour of Nombre de Dios and seek to lose himself among the foreign seamen when the fleet sails, in order to escape on board some ship of it, I sent a person to inspect the ships and look into this matter carefully.

Among the *cimarrones* brought in were some who were carried away from the Pearl Islands by force at the time the English made their first assault there. For it had been agreed among them that what gold and silver and pearls they might take were to go to the English, the *cimarrones* to have the slaves. These pieces<sup>1</sup> have therefore been returned to

<sup>1</sup> I.e. slaves.

their masters. Certain wild Indians whom they captured on their way back were sent to your majesty's Indian villages, there to be trained and instructed in matters of the faith.

So also concerning certain plate which was found where the corsairs had hidden it (amounting to a little over 1000 *pesos*), investigation is being made preparatory to delivering it to those persons from whom it was stolen.

In the conquest of these negroes, experience so far clearly shows how fruitless it is to make war upon them; except it be attempted by firmly establishing settlements among them. Even then, to extirpate them will take a long time and occasion infinite expense to your majesty's royal treasury.

This might for the present be avoided by stationing the galleys, which have been requested of your majesty, on the Atlantic coast to oppose the corsairs frequenting that shore and so cutting off their approach that they may not again join up with the *cimarrones*. These, unaided, are not a cause for alarm, especially those with whom the English entered into alliance, because in the Vallano wilderness, where they dwell contented with their nakedness and hard life, they love only the solitude of their mountains and the pleasant temper of that land; they have no aspiration to dominate, nor any other. Therefore they, alone, have never done damage in that province, nor is there reason to fear it from them, unless they make an alliance with the corsairs. This the galleys would prevent, by patrolling the coast... (p. 5)...

...Panama, May 12, 1578.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servant who kisses your majesty's royal hands.

*Doctor Alonso Criado de Castylla* (Rubric)...

## Document No. 67<sup>1</sup>

[Diego de Frias Trejo to the Crown,  
Panama, May 15, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

From the letters I have written to your majesty, reporting on this Vallano campaign, your majesty will have understood its events, especially from my latest of February 18 of this current year, in which, among other things, I informed your majesty of the capture of an Englishman they call John Butler<sup>2</sup> *alias* Chalona.

He is a great pilot, and in his calling one of the rare men of the world, and he it is who brought these English to this country. His capture was a very important and happy event, because had any been able to escape and do damage it would have been he, so tricky is he, and he knows all languages.

So also I wrote that on the Piñas River I had fallen upon the negro town and taken some negroes and negresses and Indian women whom they had carried off from the tribes with which they are at war. We killed and wounded others of the blacks.

And I wrote that, having gone over the whole region without finding a negro or trace of any, because they have separated and fled to remote and hidden fastnesses, and because there remained no English to seize in all Vallano, nor a black who could be caught, or even laid eyes upon, I had come down to the headquarters at San Miguel, where I was awaiting despatches from the viceroy to determine what to do. All of which your majesty will have seen at greater length in the letter to which I refer.

What has happened since to report to your majesty is that while I waited for the viceroy's despatches I decided to

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 1 *pliego*, original, duplicated.

<sup>2</sup> "*Joan Boteler*."

reconnoitre the region towards Old Vallano, which is where Pedro de Osua<sup>1</sup> attacked the negroes when he entered on this campaign. I suspected (p. 2) and coniectured that some might have returned to settle there. I went out with forty men. Because the soldiers are all sore and sick and very weary I could not take more. Quietly as usual I advanced to the point which Pedro de Osua reached and I went farther, and finally came up to a look-out the negroes had posted, who discovered us and ran swiftly to warn the town which they had begun to build since I entered on this campaign. It was well hidden where they thought they could not be found or discovered.

We pursued the look-out with all possible haste, who arrived at the town crying out for them to flee, and although we came up at almost the same time with him, not a black was to be seen within harquebus shot because, as we learned later, other look-outs had discovered us the day before and given warning to the town and they had left and hidden the negresses and piccaninnies and some negroes, leaving behind only the fleetest who could get away if we should find the town.

We pursued as best we were able through the mountains, but they could not be found, nor their trail, except one of those whom the English stole from a resident of Panama, who presently surrendered to us.

He told us that all these negroes had been assembling there, a few at a time, believing themselves safe and well hidden in that town which they were constructing, but that now they would flee far away and would not reassemble nor build a town in many months, according to what he had understood from them.

He said that of the English who were missing they had heard nothing except that they had fled from us and gone to the Atlantic, towards the Vallano River, which is where I found their trail; and he supposes them to be dead, because they carried no food with them, nor more than one axe, with which in so short a time they could not have built a canoe or raft in which to escape.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 10 *ante*.

He said that there are great disagreements and differences among the negroes. They complain of Anton Mandinga, who gave admission and favour to the English; and he says they are resolved to kill him, maintaining that because of him there came upon them the evils and damage which have been done them. This same thing have I understood from the other negroes whom I hold prisoners, and from the one who surrendered. And Anton Mandinga himself must have comprehended as much, for after I fell upon his village and burned it and destroyed it and captured his women and children, he has been so overcome by fear that nothing is certainly known concerning him, nor has he rejoined the other blacks.

Their village was burned for these negroes as for the rest. All their possessions and what food supplies they had were destroyed, for they could carry none. Their encampments and plantings which they had begun were destroyed, and, seeing that there were no negroes left to pursue in all that region, I returned to San Miguel, to the rest of the forces.

Inasmuch as nothing remained to do, and since to settle permanently there is not possible, nor can anybody sustain himself in that country, nor can food enough be sent in, even if there were inclination to spend (p. 3) largely; and because the commissary-general of this camp, who was there, daily petitioned me, seeing that to remain there was of no effect, except to spend your majesty's revenues, inasmuch as the English were finished and many of the negroes and their women and children taken, and the rest chastised with annoyance and the destruction of their banana plantings and what possessions they had, and frightened out of the country, I wrote to the royal *Audiencia* at Panama reporting all this, which court provided me with certain vessels in which we left. I decided to embark because in all those regions not an Englishman remained and because, as I say to your majesty, the negroes fled and hid and are so fearful that it is believed none will abide in all that land, wherefore nothing remained there wherein to serve your majesty.

I brought away all my troops very ill and worn by the numerous and excessive hardships they had endured in the

nine months we were all in the wilderness. Throughout this time God granted me good health invariably, that with health I might in person be present on every occasion, serving your majesty, which was necessary, such is the terrain and the labour entailed, in order to animate the troops to such excessive work.

I brought eighteen English, and the booty the negroes constitute, to Panama, where I was very well received with a different expression of gratitude for the good turn which has been done this realm than was shown to us when we arrived from Peru, in the lifetime of the president of this court.

Here I received a despatch from the viceroy, who supposed us to be still in the wilderness, in which he bade me send him the English captain and three or four of the leaders of them, from whom to learn matters bearing on the good of your majesty's service. He bade me leave the rest to this royal *Audiencia's* punishment, delivering them to this court. So I did and thirteen have been hanged. Five (the captain, the pilot, the ship's master and two more) I retain to carry under guard to the viceroy of Peru, for which destination I think we will leave, God willing, by the first vessels, which, I believe, will sail at the beginning of the month of June.

As for the negroes I captured, whom the English had carried off from the Pearl Islands, I ordered a notice to be cried that their owners should appear to claim them, and in consequence seven negroes and negresses were freely returned, and so will the rest be delivered which may be shown to have been stolen.

An owner also appeared for some 900 *pesos* in plate which I found hidden in the bush. The English confessed they had stolen it, and so it was returned, for in all this I believe your majesty will be served.

I understand that what has been accomplished against these English will serve as a warning so that none will be so bold again, nor will the negroes dare to give them entrance or favour, without which I hold it impossible for them to cross (p. 4) to the Pacific. Certainly it is amazing to see by what a rough and difficult route these English did cross over.



With this goes forward a map<sup>1</sup> of the Vallano mountain region, in case your majesty should be pleased to see it. The pilot Chalona made it in my presence and it is correct.

There is nothing else of which to advise your majesty, whose royal person Our Lord preserve with increase of greater estates, as we your majesty's servitors desire, etc.

Panama, May 15, 1578.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's servant who kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Diego de Frias Trejo* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> Not found, although searched for in Seville, Madrid and Simancas.

## Document No. 68<sup>1</sup>

[The *Audiencia* to the Crown, Panama, May 21, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty . . .*

(p. 5) . . . 13. By order of the viceroy, Captain Diego de Frias went into the Vallano wilderness in pursuit of the English who remained after they were scattered by Pedro de Ortega, who was sent out from here. With instructions provided him here, and with the troops he brought and those which we furnished him from here, who were the more experienced and proved the more efficient, and with the negro carriers we supplied, from the commencement of August he visited the negroes' villages and lairs and camps, in such pursuit, up to April 10, when he returned to this city with the purpose of proceeding to Peru, on the understanding that, having done this, and having various times gone over all the bush and said sites, he could, as a matter of fact, do nothing more.

Of thirty-four English who it was understood had remained at large after Pedro de Ortega returned with the booty of gold and silver taken from the Quito ship, Captain Diego de Frias brought in eighteen, among them the captain and ship's master, and as many as forty negroes and negresses. Some of these are slaves whom the English carried away from the Pearl Islands. Others are *cimarrones* and some negresses who had been taken away by force by the *cimarrones*, who come down to the rivers (p. 6) and washing-places of this city to carry them off.

Because by the viceroy's order and instruction Captain Diego de Frias asked for some of these eighteen English prisoners to take to the viceroy (for he says and writes that it is advisable to obtain information from them), we gave him four, among them the English captain.

The rest we executed in this city.

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (35), Panama 13, 2 *pliegos*, original, duplicated.

It seems that of the number of thirty-four, sixteen are lacking, of whom one is supposed to be at large in the bush, unless he has died. The other fifteen went off and away from the captain, having as their leader another called Canoa, the principal Englishman among them. Seeing themselves undone, and knowing that the launches which they had left behind on the Atlantic coast at Acla, in which to depart when they should choose, had been seized by a captain which this royal *Audiencia* sent out from Nombre de Dios, and because they were defeated and without food supplies could not maintain themselves in one body, or save themselves or hide, they divided, each party to seek its own safety.

Many measures have been taken to find these fifteen in the bush, where they have been sought several times in various quarters. So also a brigantine was sent along the Atlantic coast, from Nombre de Dios, with a force to reconnoitre certain islands in Acla Bay, where the English went inland. These islands are called the Guanas, and are near the main. In this Juan de Velasco de Barrio, general of the fleet, assisted with good will and promptitude. Later, word was sent to Don Miguel de Erasso to send again to reconnoitre the same islands, to see whether they had come out there on any raft they might have constructed, because it was confidently presumed, and held very probable, that they had done so, since no trace of them could be found in the bush, nor was there any news of them among the negroes.

And certainly until it be known what has become of these fifteen who are lacking we shall be in great disquietude, and therefore now on the departure of the fleet we are sending a person who knows them to inspect the vessels, crews and soldiers, lest any of them pass themselves off as seamen. Some of them are able to speak Spanish, though poorly.

The complete account of expenditure has been audited, covering the major portion of the disbursements, and the rest will be, and sent to your majesty.

For all of which and for what may occur in the future we entreat your majesty to provide the remedy, and instructions to be followed to put an end to these and other robberies

usually perpetrated along the coast of Cartagena and Nombre de Dios and Veragua. These robberies are numerous, and diminish the business and profits of these towns. Everybody in these realms considers that the galleys which have so frequently been asked of your majesty would be very useful, because experience has shown that large vessels are not effective. The corsairs do not sail in large vessels, nor work with them, but with their launches, leaving the ships in which they come, even when these are small, anchored in some harbour....(p. 7)

...Panama, May 21, 1578.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servants who kiss your majesty's royal hands.

*Doctor Alonso Criado de Castylla.*

*Doctor Caçeres. (Rubrics.)*

## Document No. 69<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro de Arana<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, May 21, 1578.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

Believing it to be advantageous to your majesty's service for me to report on the commencement, cause and conclusion of the Vallano war, on the state of the country, and on measures conducive to safety in the future, I desire to serve your majesty by relating what my abilities have comprehended of what I have seen and considered, that your majesty may act more generously upon my application for advancement<sup>3</sup> in the future.

Don Francisco de Toledo, viceroy of Peru, and every one in that country, being quite sure that foreigners could not cross from the Northern Sea to rob your majesty's vassals on the Southern, the authorities of this city wrote to him that English corsairs were abroad upon the Pacific, and had looted certain ships and the Pearl Islands. To remedy this situation they said it was desirable that he should serve your majesty and support this realm by sending a force for its defence, and especially persons qualified to exercise command, as leaders.

Inasmuch as they did not tell him how many the corsairs were (because they did not know), the viceroy deduced that a small body of men would not venture upon so bold and unprecedented an undertaking. Considering well the seriousness of the business, and with the counsel of the high court and of persons of weight and experience who were available in the city of Lima, he determined to serve your majesty and to furnish the relief asked of him, as was advisable to

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 3 *pliegos*, original.

<sup>2</sup> In an omitted paragraph Arana says he has served the Crown thirty-eight years, in France, Flanders, Germany, Italy and Peru, always in posts of command.

<sup>3</sup> He was made royal accountant of Cuba. Cf. Wright, I. A., *The Early History of Cuba* (Macmillan, N.Y. 1916), pp. 333-5.

put an end to the damage implied in the news they sent him.  
(p. 2)

As his lieutenant-general he commissioned Diego de Frias, his equerry, who had served him in campaigns waged against the Inca and the Chiriguanaes. He commissioned me to be campmaster and commissary-general, and, in case of the general's absence or death, to follow his instructions and command the troops; he considered that, because of the experience I have had in Europe and the Indies, he so provided the officers qualified to exercise command, as requested of him by this city and demanded by the gravity of the affair.

Because there was a limit to what he could spend, he commissioned as admiral Don Diego de Mora, a rich young man, son of a deceased resident of the city of Trujillo.

He raised a force of 145 soldiers, forcibly requisitioning sixty half-breeds, mulattoes and negroes to serve them, and sent them forward in two large vessels.

He issued order that at Manta, on the Puerto Viejo coast, two of the barks there engaged in pearl-fishing should be taken and converted into two brigantines. This we did, in order to hunt the enemy more efficiently by sea and up the coastal inlets and rivers (for where the large ships could not enter, the brigantines could, by rowing), and so discover and thoroughly search all the mouths of all the rivers there, until we should find where the English came down and whither they might return, or had returned, if they had gone back; and also to fight them more advantageously if encountered at sea, the brigantines with their oars assisting the ships, and the ships assisting the brigantines in the course of the battle. The viceroy took these measures, supposing the thieves to be much more numerous than they were.

On the way to this city, hugging the coast in accordance with the order we had, off Cape Francisco, about forty leagues from Manta, on the coast of Peru, we met a ship out of this city bound for Lima, which delivered to us a letter from Doctor Loarte, then president of this royal high court. In this he distinctly and clearly bade us, wherever his letter might find us, to turn back, because Pedro de Ortega had

dispersed and killed the English corsairs and recovered from them the prizes they had taken.

Our general considered this reason enough to return to Peru and inform the viceroy and await his order. I thought it better to continue our voyage and come to this city, both because it was inadvisable within the jurisdiction (p. 3) of Peru to keep so many men under arms for the time required to go with the news and to receive further order, and also because I feared lest Doctor Loarte's letter might be dictated by some private interest of his own, as it was; and, further, especially because in the text of our appointments the viceroy set forth that he commissioned us to drive the English from this ocean and the *cimarrones* from Vallano.

Inasmuch as the general's intention was to serve your majesty, in view of the wording of our commission and a paragraph of the instruction in which the viceroy orders him to consult me in all matters, and considering my argument sound, the general took my advice, dismissed the two brigantines, and with the soldiers and servants we continued upon our voyage, and arrived here with both ships.

Having reached this city we became thoroughly convinced that we had done right in not returning with the armada to Peru. Many English remained in Vallano.

The general and I were determined to proceed thither. Doctor Loarte took some measures to hinder our departure, because he desired himself to send out whosoever should go on your majesty's service, in such manner that he might be credited with, and thanked for, any good accomplished in that region. Hoping to avoid going there, the major portion of the forces we brought ably abetted him in these hindrances. Nevertheless, we managed so well that nothing availed to prevent us from proceeding.

This royal high court gave us forty soldiers in addition to those we brought, and also some negro carriers.

We sailed in seven vessels, landed at San Miguel Headquarters, in the Vallano region, and divided the force into three parties.

One, of seventy men, the general took to enter the country

by way of Ronconcholon, a *cimarron* village. The other party, of sixty-five men, I led across by way of the Grande and Indios Rivers to the negro settlements on the Piñas, Manta and Bogota Rivers. The third party remained at San Miguel Headquarters, being the rest of the force, under an officer ordered to protect the place and the munitions and food supplies left there, and to receive stores which might be sent from here, and to forward what we might call for from the interior.

(p. 4) The general reached Ronconcholon and its banana groves, where the English and *cimarrones* of that place were, but could capture neither Englishman nor negro, although he tried hard to get hold of some one.

I went about my enterprise, and on that excursion caught and captured the captain of the English and seven others of his soldiers, and five negroes (who served as guides in subsequent activities). With these prisoners I returned to where the general was, being anxious to know what he had accomplished and whether consultation together was necessary.

I found him and all those who were with him much cast down because they had not been able to capture any Englishman or *cimarron*, and because they had no guide to conduct them to the villages and camps of the English and negroes. They despaired of success and differed in opinion. When I appeared with the prisoners they were delighted and greatly rejoiced and recovered lost hopes.

From the English captain we learned, from what he told me when I captured him, that there were thirty-four of his men in Vallano, and that they were divided into two bands. One was with him and the other with a gentleman named Mis[t?]er Jacob Canoba. They had quarrelled, because it was the captain's opinion that they should all re-embark on the Indios River, where they had embarked the first time to go out upon the Pacific; that they should go again to the Pearl Islands, as they had before, and there seize two barks, kill the persons in them, proceed to Perico, the port of this city, from there cross to the House at Cruces in one night, kill the warden and all found in it, and seize the barks they might



need in which to escape. Jacob Canoba wanted them to go to the Atlantic and construct rafts in the port where they had disembarked, from there to go to Tolu to capture some bark with which to remedy their situation.

When I captured him, the captain and twenty-two Englishmen in his following were going to join Juan Vaquero, negro captain of the *cimarrones*, to (p. 5) carry out his project, and Mis[t?]er Jacob Canoba had taken his departure with twelve Englishmen who followed him. Because of this enmity the captain knew nothing of him.

On receipt of this news the general took for guides two of the *cimarrones* I had captured, and with his men, who were rested, set out to hunt Mis[t?]er Jacob Canoba and the Englishmen with him. Looking for them he found the master of the ship in which all the English came over.

Because this man told him that he believed those twelve Englishmen had gone to embark on the northern coast, and that they had a certain sum of silver and *reales* buried, the general crossed the range with half the troop he had with him, selecting the strongest from among them, and went to the port where they had disembarked. He did not find the English nor any sign of them, but dug up 900 *pesos* in current silver and *reales*, which have been restored to their owner in this city. He then returned to Ronconcholon, where I was waiting for him.

After the general and I had consulted together and considered certain matters, in order to determine what to do, we divided the troops. I went to Old Vallano, in pursuit of the English and *cimarrones* who might be there, but because the negro carriers deserted me (who were transporting the munitions and victuals intended for us on this expedition) I was unable to proceed beyond the point where they left me. I informed this royal high court of their desertion and asked that others be sent.

Meanwhile, not to lose time while the negroes were being sent from here in relief, I opened a trail through certain very thick, close bush where no Spaniard, Englishman or *cimarron* had been before, my object being to come down on the negro

settlements and villages on the Piñas, Manta and Bogota Rivers without warning. In that region it is necessary for a punitive party to move by night and arrive without being perceived, because the negroes' only defence against us has been to fly and seek safety in distance.

While I was occupied in blazing and making this trail, the general went to the north coast to a port which is in the middle of Acla [bay] and of the harbour which he visited when he went to hunt the twelve Englishmen; he went because he was advised that Mis[t?]er Jacob Canoba (p. 6) was proceeding thither with fourteen other Englishmen, eleven of these being those who had followed his opinion, and three being others who had joined him later. The general picked up their trail and slept in their camps, all the way to the coast, where he found trimmings and splinters of the timbers of which they had built the rafts they had made upon which to embark. He searched up and down the coast, to see if he could find any sign of them, and because he found none and was running short of supplies, he made another incursion and captured four Englishmen and fourteen *cimarrones*, men and women, who gave him the news that Jacob Canoba and the fourteen Englishmen of his party had embarked.

After all this, relief in negro carriers having been sent us from this city, the general and I joined forces and by the route which I had opened went to Acla, on the Northern coast, to hunt for the fifteen Englishmen and to see whether any others had come to that coast.

On the way we captured Chalona, an Englishman, a very important person, and four others with him, who would not have been captured had not that trail been opened, because it was impossible to get at him by any other way.

We reached the sea, and searched all the coast of Acla, up and down. Because we found no trace of anybody, and because lack of supplies exposed us to danger, we returned to the Bogota River, and thence by the Manta to the Piñas River, and on the latter we captured twelve *cimarrones*. On this journey we killed two other negroes and then returned to San Miguel Headquarters.

Later the general went to Old Vallano. He could capture not a negro, but one of those whom the English carried off by force from the Pearl Islands surrendered to him. He returned to San Miguel without being able to seize or sight either Englishman or *cimarron*.

When he had arrived, he and I met in council and discussed what was to be done. We assembled the last lot of negroes we had captured and questioned them concerning the English who were missing, and all agreed that they had embarked more than six months before in the port where the general (p. 7) had sought them the second time, and that after they embarked nothing more had been heard of them. The negroes believed these English were not in any part of Vallano or on the coasts, for if they had been they must have appeared in the negroes' banana groves, since they could not get food elsewhere, or do otherwise, and if they had appeared some negroes would have known it, who would have reported their presence, and it would of necessity have been publicly known among them. They said the negroes had killed one Englishman and would kill any others they might encounter, because of the damage we had done them on account of their friendliness to the English.

Our troops were so dilapidated that more than fifty men had no shirts or breeches to cover their nakedness, and the men were sore, tired, sick and broken, for they had laboured nine winter months, on foot, enduring heavy rains, as a matter of course marching through mud and swamps and across rivers, large and small, in a manner it had not been supposed that men could; it was not believed that they could so long withstand such hardship.

So when we had inspected all the meadowlands, bush, rivers, gulches and streams that are to be found from Old Vallano to the Piñas River and from the Southern to the Northern Sea, which is the whole region which the *cimarrones* have settled and possessed; after we had devoured and destroyed the banana groves, maize fields and other vegetable and root crops in the land, and eaten or burned the supplies they had dried and prepared for their maintenance during

what time they might be in flight from us; and had burned all the villages and camps and habitations they had in all the country, leaving not one, no matter how hidden it might be in gulch or bush; and after we had captured eighteen Englishmen, and had very certainly ascertained that the negroes had killed one, and that the fifteen remaining had fled from all the area which we could cover; seeing that we could do nothing more, nor was there more to do for your majesty's better service; after (p. 8) having consulted this royal high court as to our departure, and having received two replies from its judges and crown counsel, we gave order in respect to our departure and returned to this city without leaving behind or losing anything.

We brought eighteen Englishmen and about fifty head of *cimarrones*, males and females.

Thirteen Englishmen were hanged in this city under sentence pronounced by this royal high court.

We have the captain and the ship's master and Chalona and his brother, to take to the city of Lima, in accordance with the viceroy's order, that he may obtain from them information desirable for your majesty's service, and that they may be executed there, where their appearance on the Pacific so alarmed many and furnished others an occasion to dare to think evil. It is a good thing for such persons to see what the end is.

After we reached this city we were convinced that the fifteen English who fled were drowned or killed by the Indians of the Darien River coast, judging from what we learned and understood in Vallano concerning them, inasmuch as they have not appeared on the coast of Tolu, where they meant to go to take a bark, nor on the coast of Cartagena, nor of Nombre de Dios, nor of Chagre, nor of Veragua, nor has there been any English or French vessel which could have taken them off.

They have not been discovered among the islands of Acla Bay, where we had some suspicion they might be, by two armed frigates (one from the fleet and the other from the armada) which hunted for them there.

One of the greatest and best services rendered your majesty in all the Indies has been to capture and finish off these Englishmen before they could go to any foreign realm with the news of what they had seen and done, for were they to bring over 300 men and land them in Vallano, they could commit piracy with impunity on both the Northern and the Southern Seas, and they could not be expelled from there except at incalculable cost, because 300 of them there would be as strong as the subjects your majesty has (p. 9) in these parts, given the nature of that terrain... (p. 10)....

...Panama, May 21, 1578.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's vassal and humble servant kisses your majesty's feet.

*Pedro de Arana* (Rubric)....

## Document No. 70<sup>1</sup>

[John Oxenham, deposition<sup>2</sup>, Panama, July 7, 1578.]

(p. 30) ... In the city of Panama on the seventh day of the month of July in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy eight, I, Juan Lorenzo Perez, his majesty's notary, clerk of this royal *Audiencia*,... went to the public jail of this city, where was confined one of the Englishmen whom General Diego de Frias and his troops brought from Vallano, whom I, the notary, ordered to be brought before me.

*The English  
prisoner's  
deposition.*

I asked him if he was the captain of the English who crossed to this (p. 31) Pacific Ocean, and if he was a Christian<sup>3</sup> and had been baptized, and what his name was.

The Englishman said that his name was John Oxenham, English by birth, and that he was the captain of the English who crossed to this ocean, and that he is a Christian and has been baptized.

Whereupon I, the notary, swore John Oxenham<sup>4</sup>, English captain, by God, Our Lord, and a sign of the cross; he took the oath and promised to speak the truth; and, being questioned according to the tenth item of the interrogatory drawn and presented by Don Gomez de Rojas, said that:

*He admits  
that he sur-  
rendered to  
Don Gomez<sup>5</sup>*

With four Englishmen in his company, being in a banana grove in Vallano, deponent learned that a party was advancing

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-10, Panama 41, 9 *pliegos*, legalized copy.

<sup>2</sup> Don Gomez de Rojas, having served through the campaign under Frias Trejo, petitioned the *Audiencia* to hear evidence as to his services, that he might apply to the crown for reward. He presented his interrogatory and between June 18 and July 7, 1578, various witnesses deposed according to it, among them John Oxenham, whom Don Gomez claimed to have captured.

<sup>3</sup> To the notary this word had its Spanish meaning of Roman Catholic; to Oxenham, undoubtedly, it had its English meaning of "a believer in Christ."

<sup>4</sup> *Juan Aquesme* in the original.

<sup>5</sup> The interrogatory and omitted depositions show that when the expedition divided at Real de San Miguel, Gomez de Rojas accompanied Campmaster Arana, and on September 7 they came upon certain *cimarrones* whom Don Gomez with some 25 or 26 men pursued. Next day, in a banana grove on the Banique River, he captured an Englishman who seems

through the bush, and that it was Campmaster Pedro de Arana and certain soldiers. Deponent already knew that they had come into Vallano. One day he saw the campmaster's men and realized that they also had seen him. He fled, seeking to hide behind a cabuya or bejuco tree, but could not reach it. While so endeavouring, he looked and saw a soldier, whom they call Gonzalo, and a negro. Gonzalo was armed with a sword and shield, and the (p. 32) negro with a bow and arrows. Deponent gripped a lance and advanced on the soldier and on the negro, and they gave back.

And while deponent was seeking cover and to hide, he saw Don Gomez de Rojas, a soldier, with a harquebus, with match lighted on the serpentine, aimed at deponent to fire upon him; and deponent, fearing lest he be killed, threw up his hands and cried to Don Gomez: "For the love of God, don't kill me!"

Don Gomez ordered him to drop his lance, and deponent dropped it. Instantly Don Gomez and the soldier named Gonzalo and the negro, and many other soldiers who came

to have betrayed Oxenham's whereabouts. The campmaster now came up and his united troop pressed forward, Gomez de Rojas in the vanguard. But it was Arana who first saw the enemy, evidently on higher ground than the Spaniards held. He shouted to Rojas, who ran up and after them.

"...pursuing the English, Don Gomez overtook Captain John Oxenham, to whom, when he sought to defend himself with a lance, he cried out: 'Surrender, dog!' And aimed a harquebus to shoot. And the English captain surrendered to him, his knee to earth, imploring mercy. He yielded his arms to Don Gomez, who held him a prisoner until the campmaster came up and ordered him to go with twelve men in pursuit of the other Englishmen who were fleeing"—The interrogatory, this document, pp. 9-10. Witnesses bear out Don Gomez' claim that it was to him Oxenham surrendered. One "saw that Don Gomez de Rojas went after the captain of the English, who had made a stand, with a lance, against a negro and a soldier named Gonzalo Hernandez. He had turned on them and would not surrender to them. At this juncture Don Gomez came up with his harquebus and covered the captain, so the soldier and negro could close with him and seize him, as they did"—*Ibid.* pp. 15-16. Another had heard from Oxenham "how a negro in the garb of a *cimarron* came up, seeking to take him, but he held him off with a lance, and so also a soldier named Gonzalo, armed with a sword and shield, and him also the English captain held off, playing the lance. At this juncture Don Gomez arrived with his harquebus and thrust it in his face, crying: 'Surrender, dog!' And the captain surrendered to him, kneeling on the ground and begging for mercy..."—*Ibid.* pp. 26-27.

up, laid hands upon deponent and seized him, maltreating him, and giving him many cuffs and knife-wounds on the head.

This is the truth, by the oath he took. He said that he is forty-two years of age; and he signed his name.

This deposition being read to him, he ratified it, witness being Juan de Amor, soldier, guard over the said Englishman.

John Oxenham . . . <sup>1</sup>.

*Oxuano* in the original. Notarial certificate follows.



## Document No. 71<sup>1</sup>

[Doctor Diego de Villanueva Zapata<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, October 2, 1579.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Catholic Royal Majesty*

... The *cimarrones* of Puerto Bello, who negotiated for peace after those of Vallano had done so, have shown themselves more in earnest. A site is already selected for their village a league and a half from Nombre de Dios on the Francisca River, where soldiers and civil officials are assigned them. . . . They have been given their letters of freedom, and clothing. Nothing remains except to fetch their maize and small belongings by sea, and to bring in the women, which will all be done shortly.

Having given great evidence of a desire for peace, and of humility and Christianity, the blacks of Vallano have failed of their promise and withdrawn and revolted. Opinions differ concerning this matter and various persons are blamed, especially their leaders and principal men. At the time of the truce they desired to come to this city by sea, their followers to proceed by land. General Pedro de Ortega would not agree. This and other childish differences having occurred, (p. 2) because these are unreliable people, changeable and unreasonable, they withdrew into their country. . . . Seeing that they had not fulfilled the agreement, they were summoned by crier and a time allowed them, and finally troops were sent against them. . . .

... Panama, October 2, 1579.

Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's humble servant kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Doctor Diego de Villanueva Zapata* (Rubric).

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-3-32, Panama 33, 1 *pliego*, original. Duplicated in 69-2-23, Panama 13.

<sup>2</sup> Crown counsel.

## Document No. 72<sup>1</sup>

[Licentiate Cepeda<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Panama, May 22, 1580.]

(p. 1)

†

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

... Both ways by which this Pacific Ocean may be entered have been attempted by the English. The first attempt was by way of this narrow neck of land, washed by both the Pacific and the Atlantic, and they were invited and encouraged by the *cimarrones* who are at large there.

From those captured in the war it is learned that these negroes expect the English to return, because sixteen who escaped, when they were dispersed and the rest of them killed, promised to come back.

To get them out of the country the negroes gave them a canoe in which they went to Tolu, a town within the jurisdiction of Cartagena, where they bettered themselves to a frigate, of whom and of the crew of the vessel seized with it nothing has been heard to the present time.

In this hope, relying on that promise, these negroes keep their look-outs posted.

To hamper this purpose and design I have determined to station a garrison in the port they call Acla, frequented by corsairs. Other garrisons are being detailed to points inland, that they may not make use of the crops they have there. These blacks are those of Vallano, who offered to surrender and have not kept their word, alleging that the peace agreed upon with them in times past was not maintained. Others say the reason was careless measures even less well thought out. Evidence is being taken in the matter. I will send the results to your majesty's council.

Another band of negroes is that which inhabits Puerto Bello

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23 (44), Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> President of the *Audiencia*.

near Nombre de Dios. These, although fewer, were very prejudicial; they were highwaymen who repeatedly committed robberies along this road which leads from sea to sea. They have been brought to obedience and your majesty's service... (p. 2)....

(p. 3)...Panama, May 22, 1580.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Humble, least servant of your majesty, who kisses your majesty's royal feet and hands.

*Licentiate Cepeda* (Rubric).

## Document No. 73<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro Gonzalez de Meseta<sup>2</sup> to the Crown,  
Nombre de Dios, June 3, 1580.]

(p. 1)

+

### *Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty*

...I wrote to your majesty and reported at length on the existing state of the war against these negroes, and how they came in to ask for peace on January 15 of last year, at which solicitation I was present in the city of Panama, and I opposed granting it since I believed it to be disadvantageous to the royal service, because the negroes came treacherously to spy out and estimate the troops and the soldiery which had come from Spain for the war against them, in continuance of the campaign already in progress. Certain incidents having demonstrated that they lied and were not proceeding truthfully, I opposed by word of mouth and in writing before your majesty's royal *Audiencia* in Panama, urging that peace be not granted them except on suitable conditions, with exchange of hostages, for hostages were available in their captains, women and children.

Despite my opposition and the demands I entered, it was decided to send Pedro de Ortega, your majesty's general, to treat with them concerning the peace they sought.

They broke their word, like persons who preferred to sustain their evil liberty, in expectation of the English who left the country (part of Captain Butler's company) and sailed for England, promising to return with a great force of men and war materials. Although the said general waited longer than the time he had specified to them, they did not appear. On the other hand, they killed three negroes whom the general sent out to them, in view of their delay in replying.

Of all which I gave account in my writs and memorials

<sup>1</sup> *A. de I.* 69-2-23, Panama 13, 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> Burgher of Nombre de Dios, high sheriff there.

which I presented before your majesty's royal *Audiencia*, as your majesty will have seen from the evidence I sent with my despatch and many other warnings I gave, that the said negroes might not have an opportunity to recover, as they had during the space of a year through which the matter was in negotiation (the war was to have been over in a year) because so much time and delay was allowed them. When the enemy did show themselves they were so reorganized and had their retreats so well prepared in so many places, although I pursued them and they are hard pressed, because of the anticipation and hope they have that the corsairs whom they expect will appear, they do not fail to maintain the war, as your majesty will be advised by persons crossing from this realm... (p. 2)...

Having gone out to reconnoitre the country along the northern seaboard, I captured certain *cimarrones* from whom, even compelling them to speak, I learned what those English did who remained in the bush with them, from Captain Butler's company. They deposed in agreement that fifteen English left, under the command of Peter Canoa, and they are expecting them to return in great strength, as will appear to your majesty from the deposition of the said negroes, enclosed....

Nombre de Dios, June 3, 1580.

Sacred Catholic Royal Majesty

Your majesty's least vassal kisses your majesty's royal feet.

*Pedro Gonzalez de Meçeta* (Rubric)...

## Enclosure<sup>1</sup>

[Pedro and the *zambigo*<sup>2</sup>, statement, January 13, [1580?].]

(p. 1)

†

On the thirteenth day of the month of January, talking with the *cimarron*, and inquiring of him certain matters concerning the war, the campmaster asked him where the English had gone who escaped from Captain Chalona's party. He said that Anton Mandinga had given them subsistence, roasted maize and banana flour, and they went in a canoe to Tolu to take one of the vessels they might find there, in which to go to England.

Asked how many these English were, he said eight.

Asked who was their leader, he said that his name is Peter Canoa.

Asked how soon they promised to return, he said that they would return after two years, within the third year.

Asked if they took any negro with them, he said no.

Asked where they would land when they came back, he said at Acla, which was why Anton Mandinga had gone to settle on the north coast, to watch for them.

He said that a black flag was the signal agreed upon between them, to be made from the sea, that they might be recognized.

And so they would come with many oared vessels and great ships to Acla, whence one party would take Nombre de Dios by sea, and by land from Acla a larger body of men would proceed to the Indios River to build launches.

Asked what they intended to do with the launches, or why they would build them, he said that when they were finished they would go to the Pearl Islands and lie in wait, and that they were agreed to go from there by night to take Panama, with (p. 2) the *cimarrones*.

Asked what sort of man that Peter Canoa was, he said he

<sup>1</sup> 1 *pliego*, original.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the mixed breed (negro and Indian).

was about thirty years old, blonde, tall, and it was his purpose to return with some great captain, or with Captain Francis<sup>1</sup>, to avenge those who were killed in Chalona's company and occupy the land.

Asked if he ever heard the English say that they had come by their queen's order, he said they had not come with her authorization, but surreptitiously, but that now it was their intention to ask the queen's assistance and authority, representing to her the wealth to be had and the favour and friendliness with which the *cimarrones* support their project to ruin the settlements on the Main, according to the plan stated, and to make themselves masters of the whole country.

And this was what he stated in the presence of soldiers and military officers.

*Pedro Gonzalez de Meceta* (Rubric).

By order of the campmaster,

*Diego Perez*, notary (Rubric).

The *zambigo* said those missing numbered fifteen. . . . (p. 4)  
. . . Transcript of what the *cimarron* and the *zambigo* said. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Drake.







# Sir Francis Drake Revived<sup>1</sup>:

Calling upon this Dull or Effeminate Age to  
follow his Noble steps for Gold and Silver.

By this Memorable Relation of the Rare occurrences  
(never yet declared to the World) in a third Voyage made  
by him into the West-Indies, in the yeeres 72. and 73. when  
*Nombre de Dios* was by him and fiftie two others  
onely in his Companie surprised.

Faithfully taken out of the Report of M. *Christopher Ceely, Ellis  
Hixom* and others, who were in the same Voyage with him.

By PHILIP NICHOLS, Preacher.

Reviewed by Sir FRANCIS DRAKE himselfe before his death,  
and much holpen and enlarged by divers Notes with his owne  
hand here and there Inserted.

Set forth by Sir FRANCIS DRAKE Baronet  
(his Nephew) now living.

LONDON,

Printed for *Nicholas Bourne*, dwelling at the South  
Entrance of the Royall Exchange, 1628.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the copy in the British Museum, Grenville Library. The original has been followed very closely indeed (in spelling, punctuation, etc., etc.).



(p. iii)

To  
THE HIGH  
AND MIGHTIE  
CHARLES THE FIRST

Of Great Britaine, France and Ire-  
land King: All the blessings of this  
and a better Life.

Most gracious Sovereigne:

*THAT this briefe Treatise is yours, both by right and by succession, will appeare by the Authors and Actors ensuing Dedication. To praise either the Mistris or the Servant, might justly incurre the censure of Quis eos unquam sanus vituperavit, eithers worth having sufficiently blazed their fame.*

(p. iv) *This Present looseth nothing by glancing on former Actions, and the observation of passed adventures may probably advantage future employments. Cæsar wrote his owne Commentaries, and this dooer was partly the Inditor. Neither is there wanting living testimonie to confirme its truth. For his sake then, cherish what is good, and I shall willingly entertaine checke for what is amisse. Your favourable acceptance, may encourage my Collecting of more neglected Noates. How-ever, though Vertue (as Lands) be not inheritable, yet hath he left of his Name one that resolves and therein joyes to approve himselfe.*

Your most humble and loyall Subject,

FRANCIS DRAKE.



(p. v)

The Dedicatorie Epistle intended to Q. ELIZABETH,  
Written by Sir *Francis Drake*, Deceased.

TO

# THE QUEENES MOST

Excellent Majestie, my most

*dread Soveraigne.*

MADAM, seeing divers have diversly reported and written of these Voyages and Actions which I have attempted & made, everie one endeavoring to bring to light whatsoever inklings or conjectures they have had; whereby many untruths have beene published, and the certain truth concealed, as I have thought it necessarie my selfe, as in a *Card* to pricke the principall points of the Counsailes taken, attempts made, and successe had, during the whole course of my employment in these services against the *Spaniards*, not as setting Sayle, for maintaining my reputation in mens judgement, but only as sitting at Helme if occasion shall be, for conducting the (p. vi) like Actions hereafter, So I have accounted it my duetie to present this Discourse to your Majestie as of right, either for it selfe, being the first fruites of your servants Pen, or for the matter, being service done to your Majestie by your poore vassall against your great Enemie, at such times, in such places, and after such sort, as may seeme strange to those that are not acquainted with the whole carriage thereof, but will be a pleasing remembrance to your Highnesse, who take the apparent height of the Almightyes favour towards you, by these events, as truest instruments, humbly submitting my selfe to your Gracious censure, both in writing and presenting, that posteritie be not deprived of such helpe as may happily be gained hereby, and our present Age (at least) may be satisfied in the rightfulnessse of these Actions, which hitherto have beene silenced, and your Servants labour not seeme

altogether lost, not onely in Travell by Sea and Land, but also in writing the Report thereof, a worke to him no lesse troublesome, yet made pleasant and sweete, in that it hath beene, is and shall bee, for your Majesties content; to whom I have devoted my selfe, live or die.

FRANCIS DRAKE.

*Jan. 1. 1592.*

(p. vii)

## To the courteous Reader.

HONEST Reader, without Apologie I desire thee in this insuing Discourse to observe with me the power and Justice of the Lord of Hostes, who could enable so meane a Person to right himselfe upon so mightie a Prince, together with the goodnesse and Providence of God very observeable, in that it pleased him to raise this man, not onely from a low condition, but even from the state of Persecution. His Father suffered in it, being forced to flye from his House (neere South Tavistocke in Devon) into Kent, and there to inhabit in the Hull of a Ship, wherein many of his yonger Sonnes were borne. He had twelve in all, and as it pleased God to give most of them a being upon the Water, so the greatest part of them dyed at Sea. The yongest, who though he were [?] as farre as any, yet dyed at home, whose posteritie inherites that which by himselfe and this Noble Gentleman the eldest Brother, was hardly yet worthily gotten.

I could more largely acquaint thee, that this Voyage was his third<sup>1</sup> he made into the West-Indies; after that his excellent service both by Sea and Land in Ireland, under (p. viii) Walter Earle of Essex. His next, about the World. Another wherein he tooke Saint Iago, Carthagen, Saint Domingo, Saint Augustino; his doings at Cadiz; besides the first Carricke taught by him to Sayle into England; his stirrings in Eightie seven; his remarkable Actions in Eightie eight; his endeavours in the Portugall employment; his last enterprise determined by death, and his filling Plimouth with a plentiful streame of fresh water. But I passe by all these. I had rather thou shouldest enquire of others, then to seeme my selfe a vaine-glorious man.

I intend not his praise. I strive onely to set out the praise of his and our good God that guided him in his truth, and protected

<sup>1</sup> This was certainly Drake's fifth or sixth voyage to the Indies. Cf. pp. 253-7, immediately following, where other such voyages are mentioned. The present venture is there listed as third, evidently in a sequence of enterprises the purpose of which was not trade (as it had been of the preceding) but war, for revenge and profit.



*him in his courses. My ends are to stirre thee up to the worship of God and service of our King and Countrey by his example. If any thing be worth thy consideration, conclude with me that the Lord onely can doe great things.*

Francis Drake

(p. 1)

# SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

## REVIVED.

Calling upon this Dull or Effeminate  
Age to follow his Noble Steps for  
Gold and Silver.

AS there is a generall vengeance which secretly pursueth the doers of wrong and suffereth them not to prosper, albeit no man of purpose empeach them, so is there a particular indignation, engrafted in the bosome of all that are wronged, which ceaseth not seeking by all meanes possible to redresse or remedie the wrong received. Insomuch as those great and mightie men, in whom their prosperous estate hath bred such an over-weening of themselves that they doe not onely wrong their inferiours but despise them being injured, seeme to take a verie unfit course for their own safetie, and farre unfitter for their rest. For, as *Æsop*e teacheth, even the Fly hath her spleene and the Emmet is not without her choller, and both together many times finde (p. 2) meanes whereby though the Eagle lay her egges in Jupiters lap, yet, by one way or other, she escapeth not requitall of her wrong done the Emmet.

Among the manifold examples hereof, which former ages have committed to memorie, or our time yeelded to sight, I suppose there hath not beene any more notable then this in hand, either in respect of the greatnesse of the person by whom the first injury was offered, or the meanesse of him who righteth himself, the one being (in his owne conceit) the mightiest Monarch of all the world, the other an English Captaine, a meane subject of her Majesties. Who (besides the wrongs received at *Rio de Hacha* with Captaine *John Lovell* in the yeares 65. and 66.) having beene grievously indamaged at Saint *John de Ullua* in the bay of *Mexico*, with Captaine

*John Hawkins*, in the yeares 67. and 68. not onely in the losse of his goods of some value, but also of his kinsmen and & friends, and that by the falshood of *Don Martin Henriquez*, then the viceroy of *Mexico*, and finding that no recompence could bee recovered out of *Spaine*, by any of his owne meanes or by her Majesties letters, hee used such helps as hee might by two severall voiajes into the West Indies: the first with two Ships, the one called the *Dragon*, the other the *Swan*, in the yeare 70; the other in the *Swan* alone in the yeare 71. to gaine such intelligences as might further him to get some amends for his losse. And having, in those two voiajes, gotten such certaine notice of the persons & places aimed at as he thought requisite, and there upon with good deliberation resolved on a third voyage (the description whereof we have now in hand) hee accordingly prepared his shippes and Company, and then, taking the first opportunity of a good winde, had such successe in his proceedings as now followes farther to be declared.

24. On Whitsunday Eve, being the 24. of May in the yeare  
572. 1572. Captaine *Drake* in the *Pascha*<sup>1</sup> of *Plimouth* of 70 tonnes (p. 3) his Admirall, with the *Swan* of the same Port of 25 tonnes his Vice-Admirall, in which his brother *John Drake* was Captaine (having in both of them of men and boyes seaventy three, all voluntarily assembled, of which the eldest was fifty, all the rest under thirty: so divided that there were forty seaven in one ship, and twenty six in the other: both richly furnished, with victualles and apparell for a whole yeare: and no lesse heedfully provided of all manner of munition, Artillery, Artificers, stufte and tooles, that were requisite for such a Man of warre in such an attempt, but especially having three dainty Pinnases, made in *Plimouth*, taken a sunder all in peeces and stowed aboard, to be set up as occasion served:)

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that this was the *Pasco* belonging to the Hawkins brothers. The *Pasco* (described as of 40 tons) went with Lovell's expedition in 1566. In a list of July, 1570, the Hawkins fleet includes the *Pasco*, 70 tons (*S.P. Dom. Eliz.* vol. 71, no. 75). In another list of ships belonging to John Hawkins, 1571, occurs the *Pasco*, 80 tons (*Add. MSS.* 26056 B, f. 251). Such variations of estimated tonnage for the same vessel are not unusual. In these two Hawkins lists the *Swan* does not appear.

set sayle from out of the Sound of *Plimouth*, with intent to land at *Nombre de Dios*.

The wind continued prosperous and favorable at North-east, and gave us a very good passage, without any alteration or change, so that, albeit we had sight of *Porto Santo*, one of *June 3.* the *Maderas*, and of the *Canaries* also within twelve dayes of our setting forth, yet we never strooke sayle, nor came to anchor, nor made any stay for any cause, neither there nor else where, until 25. dayes after, when we had sight of the *June 28.* Iland of *Guadalupe*, one of the Ilands of the West Indies, goodly high land.

The next morning we entred between *Dominica & Guada-* *June 29.* *lupe*, where we descried two canoas, comming from a rocky Iland, three leagues off *Dominica*, which usually repayre thither to fish, by reason of the great plenty thereof, which is there continually to be found. We landed on the South side of it, remaining there three daies to refresh our men, and water our ships out of one of those goodly rivers, which fall downe off the mountaine. There wee saw certaine poore cottages built with Palmito boughs and branches, but no inhabitants at that time, civill nor savage, the cottages (it may be, for we could know no certaine cause of the solita-(p. 4) rinesse we found there) serving, not for continuall inhabitation, but onely for their uses that came to that place at certaine seasons to fish.

The third day after, about three in the after-noone, wee *July 1.* set saile from thence, towards the Continent of *Terra firma*. And the fifth day after wee had sight of the high land of *Santa Martha*, but came not neere the shoare by ten leagues, *July 6.* but thence directed our course for a place called by us *Port Phesant*, for that our Captaine had so named it in his former voyage, by reason of the great store of those goodly Fowles which he and his Company did then daily kill, and feed on, in that place. In this course, notwithstanding wee had two dayes calme, yet within six dayes we arrived at our *Port* *July 12.* *Phesant*, which is a fine round Bay<sup>1</sup>, of verie safe harbour for all winds, lying betweene two high points, not past halfe a

<sup>1</sup> On the Acla coast.

cables length over at the mouth, but within eight or ten cables length everie way, having ten or twelve fadome water, more or lesse, full of good fish, the soile also verie fruitfull; which may appeare by this, that our Captaine having been in this place within a yeere and few dayes before, and having rid the place with many alleyes and paths made, yet now all was so overgrowne againe, as that wee doubted at first whether this were the same place or no.

At our entrance into this Bay, our Captaine having given order to his brother what to doe if any occasion should happen in his absence, was on his way, with intent to have gone aland, with some few only in his company, because hee knew there dwelt no Spanyards within thirtie five leagues of that place, *Tolou* being the neerest to the Eastwards, and *Nombre de Dios* to the westwards, where any of that Nation dwelt. But as we were rowing a shoare, we saw a smoake in the woods, even neere the place which our Captaine had aforetime frequented; therefore thinking it fit to take more strength with us, he caused his other boat also to (p. 5) be manned with certaine muskets and other weapons, suspecting some enemie had beene a shoare.

When wee landed, wee found by evident markes that there had beene lately there, a certaine English man of *Plimouth* called *John Garret*, who [had] beene conducted thither by certaine English Mariners which had beene there with our Captaine in some of his former voyages. He had now left a plate of Lead, nailed fast to a mightie great tree (greater then any foure men, joyning hands, could fathome about) on which were engraven these words, directed to our Captaine:

*Captaine Drake, if you fortune to come to this Port, mak hast away, for the Spaniards which you had with you here the last yeere have bewrayed this place, and taken away all that you left here. I departed from hence, this present 7. of July, 1572.*

Your verie loving friend

JOHN GARRET.

The smoake which wee saw was occasioned by a fire which the said *Garret* and his Companie had made before their

departure, in a very great tree (not farre from this which had the lead nayled on it) which had continued burning at least five dayes before our arrivall.

This advertisement notwithstanding, our Captaine meant not to depart before he had built his Pinnases, which were yet aboard in peices, for which purpose he knew this Port a most convenient place. And therefore, assoone as we had mored our Ships, our Captaine commanded his Pinnases to be brought ashore, for the Carpenters to set up, himselve employing all his other companie in fortifying a place which he had chosen out as a most fit plot, of three quar-(p. 6)ters of an acre of ground, to make some strength or safetie for the present, as sufficiently as the meanes he had would affoord; which was performed by felling of great trees and bowsing and haling them together with great Pulleis and halsers, untill they were inclosed to the waters, and then letting others fall upon them, untill they had raised with trees and boughes thirtie foote in height round about, leaving onely one gate to issue at neere the waters side. Which every night (that we might sleepe in more safetie and securitie) was shut up, with a great tree drawne athwart it.

The whole plot was built in a Pentagonall forme, to wit, of five equall sides and angles, of which angles two were towards the sea, and that side betweene them was left open, for the easie launcing of our Pinnases. The other foure equall sides were holely (excepting the gate before mentioned) firmly closed up. Without, instead of a trench, the ground was rid for fiftie foote space, round about.

The rest was verie thicke with trees, of which many were of those kindes which are never without greene leaves, till they are dead at the roote (excepting onely one kinde of tree amongst them, much like to our Ash, which when the sunne commeth right over them, causing great raines, suddainely casteth all their leaves, viz. within three dayes, and yet within sixe dayes after becomes all greene againe). The leaves of the other trees do also in part fal away, but so as the trees continue still greene notwithstanding, being of a marvelous height, and supported as it were with five or sixe naturall buttresses

growing out of their bodies, so farre that three men may so be hidden in each of them that they which shall stand in the verie next buttresse shall not be able to see them. One of them specially was marked to have had seaven of those staies or buttresses, for the supporting of his greatnesse and height, which being measured with a line close by the barke and neere to the ground, as it (p. 7) was indented or extant, was found to be above thirtie nine yards about. The wood of those trees is as heavie or heavier then *Brasil* or *Lignum vitæ*, and is in colour white.

July 13. The next day after we had arrived there came also into that bay an English Barke of the Ile of *Wight*, of Sir *Edward Horseyes*, wherein *James Rawse*<sup>1</sup> was Captaine and *John Overy* Master, with thirtie men, of which some had beene with our Captaine in the same place the yeere before. They brought in with them a *Spanish* Carvell of *Sivell*<sup>2</sup> (which he had taken the day before, athwart of that place, being a Carvell of *Adviso* bound for *Nombre de Dios*) and also one Shallop with Oares, which he had taken at Cape *Blancke*. This Captaine *Rawse*, understanding our Captaines purpose, was desirous to joyne in consort with him, and was received upon conditions agreed on betweene them.

July 20. Within seven dayes after his comming, having set up our Pinnaces, and dispatched all our businesse in providing all things necessarie out of our ships into our Pinnaces, wee departed from that harbrough, setting sayle in the morning towards *Nombre de Dios*, continuing our course till wee came to the Iles of *Pinos*: where being within three dayes arrived, we found two Fregates of *Nombre de Dios*, lading plancke and timber from thence.

July 22. The Negroes which were in those Fregates gave us some particular understanding of the present state of the towne, and besides told us that they had heard a report that certaine souldiers<sup>3</sup> should come thither shortly, and were daily looked

<sup>1</sup> Read Ranse. Cf. Corbett, *o.c.*, p. 156, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Seville. Cf. Document No. 17.

<sup>3</sup> The negroes may have been attempting to deceive the enemy, for the Spanish documents do not show that any reinforcements were sent to *Nombre de Dios* until after the English attack; cf. Documents Nos. 25, etc.

for, from the Governor of *Panama* and the countrey thereabout, to defend the towne against the *Symerons* (A blacke people which about eightie yeeres past fled from the *Spaniards*, their Masters, by reason of their crueltie, and are since growne to a nation, under two Kings of their owne<sup>1</sup>. The one inhabiteth to the West, th'other to the East of the way from *Nombre de Dios* to *Panama*) which had neere surprised it about sixe weekes before.

(p. 8) Our Captaine, willing to use those Negroes well (not hurting himselfe), set them a shoare upon the maine, that they might perhaps joyne themselves to their countrimen the *Symerons*, and gaine their libertie if they would, or if they would not, yet by reason of the length and troublesomenesse of the way by land to *Nombre de Dios*, he might prevent any notice of his comming, which they should be able to give. For hee was loath to put the towne to too much charge (which hee knew they would willingly bestow) in providing before hand for his entertainment, and therefore he hastened his going thither, with as much speed and secrecie as possibly he could.

To this end, disposing of all his companies according as they inclined most, he left the three Ships and the Carvell with Captaine *Rause*, and chose into his foure Pinnaces (Captaine *Rauses* Shallop made the fourth) besides fiftie three of our men, twentie more of Captaine *Rauses* companie, with which he seemed competently furnished to atchieve what he intended: especially having proportioned, according to his owne purpose and our mens disposition, their severall armes, *viz.* sixe Targets, sixe Firepikes, twelve Pikes, twentie foure Muskets and Callivers, sixteene Bowes, and sixe Partizans, two Drums, and two Trumpets.

Thus having parted from our companie we arrived at the *July 28.* Iland of *Cativaas*, being twentie five leagues distant, about five dayes after. There we landed all in the morning betimes, and our Captaine trained his men, delivering them their severall weapons and armes, which hitherto he had kept verie faire and safe in good caske. And exhorting them, after his

<sup>1</sup> pp. xxxviii-ix, *ante*.



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<sup>1</sup> pp. xxxviii-ix, *ante*.

manner, he declared the greatnesse of the hope of good things that was there, the weakenesse of the towne, being unwall'd, and the hope he had of prevailing, to recompence his wrongs, especially now that he should come (p. 9) with such a crew, who were like minded with himselfe, and at such a time, as he should be utterly undiscovered.

Therefore, even that afternoone, hee causeth us to set saile for *Nombre de Dios*, so that before Sunne set we were as farre as *Rio Francisco*. Thence hee led us hard aboard the shore (that we might not be descried of the watchhouse) untill that being come within two leagues of the point of the Bay, he caused us to strike a hull and cast our grappers, riding so untill it was darke night. Then we waighed againe and set saile, rowing hard aboard the shore, with as much silence as we could, till we recovered the point of the harbour under the high land: there we stayed all silent, purposing to attempt the towne in the dawning of the day, after that we had reposed our selves for a while.

But our captaine with some others of his best men, finding that our people were talking of the greatnesse of the towne, and what their strength might be, especially by the report of the Negroes that we tooke in the Ile of *Pinos*, thought it best to put these conceits out of their heads, and therefore to take the opportunitie of the rising of the Moone that night, perswading them that it was the day dawning. By this occasion we were at the Towne a large houre sooner then first was purposed, for we arrived there by three of the clocke after midnight.

At what time it fortun'd that a ship<sup>1</sup> of *Spaine*, of sixtie tunnes, laden with Canarie wines and other commodities, which had but lately come into the Bay, and had not yet furd her sprit-saile, espying our foure Pinnaces, being an extraordinarie number, and those rowing with many Oares, sent away her Gundeloe<sup>2</sup> towards the Towne, to give warning; but our Captaine, perceiving it, cut betwixt her and the Towne, forcing her to goe to th'other side of the Bay, whereby

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Documents Nos. 17, 23, etc.

<sup>2</sup> A ship's boat.

wee landed without impeachment, al-(p. 10)though we found one Gunner upon the Platforme, in the verie place where we landed, being a sandy Bay and no Key at all, not past twentie yards from the houses.

There we found six great Peeces of brasse Ordnance, mounted upon their Carriages, some Demy, some whole Culvering. We presently dismounted them. The Gunner fled. The Towne tooke alarme (being verie readie thereto, by reason of their often disquieting by their neere neighbors the *Symerons*) as we perceived, not only by the noyse and cries of the people, but by the Bell ringing out, and Drums running up and downe the Towne.

Our Captaine, according to the Directions which hee had given over night to such as hee had made choyce of for the purpose, left twelve to keepe the Pinnaces, that we might be sure of a safe retreat, if the worst befell. And having made sure work of the Platform before he would enter the Towne, hee thought best first to view the Mount on the East side of the Towne, where he was informed by sundry intelligences the yeere before they had an intent to plant Ordnance, which might scowre round about the Towne. Therefore, leaving one halfe of his company to make a stand at the foot of the Mount, he marched up presently unto the top of it, with all speed, to try the truth of the report for the more safetie. There wee found no peece of Ordnance, but onely a verie fit place prepared for such use, and therefore we left it without any of our men, and with all celeritie returned downe the Mount. Then our Captaine appointed his brother, with *John Oxnam* and sixteene other of his men, to goe about behinde the Kings treasure-house, and enter neere the Easter end of the market-place; himselfe with the rest, would passe up the broad street, into the market-place, with sound of Drum and Trumpet.

The Firepikes, divided halfe to the one and halfe to the (p. 11) other company, served no lesse for fright to the enemy then light of our men, who by this means might discerne everie place verie well, as if it were neere day, whereas the inhabitants stood amazed at so strange a sight, marvelling

what the matter might be and imagining, by reason of our Drums and Trumpets sounding in so sundry places, that we had beene a farre greater number then we were.

Yet by meanes of the Souldiers<sup>1</sup>, which were in the Towne, and by reason of the time which wee spent in marching up and downe the Mount, the Souldiers and the Inhabitants had put themselves in armes, and brought their companies in some order, at the South-east end of the market-place, neere the Governours house, and not farre from the gate of the Towne, which is only one, leading towards *Panama*, having (as it seems) gathered themselves thither, either that in the Governours sight they might shew their valour, if it might prevaile, or else that by the gate they might best take their *Vale*, and escape readiest.

And to make a shew of farre greater numbers of shot, or else of a custome they had by the like device to terrifie the *Symerons*, they had hung lines with matches lighted, overthwart the Wester-end of the market-place, betweene the Church and the Crosse, as though there had beene in a readinesse some company of shot, whereas indeed there was not past two or three that taught these lines to dance, till they themselves ran away, as soone as they perceived they were discovered.

But the Souldiers, and such as were joyned with them, presented us with a jolly hot volley of shot, beating full upon the egresse of that street in which we marched, and levelling verie low, so as their bullets oft times grazed on the sand. We stood not to answer them in like tearmes; but having discharged our first volley of shot, and fea-(p. 12)thered them with our arrowes (which our Captaine had caused to be made of purpose in *England*, not great sheafe arrowes, but fine roving shafts, very carefully reserved for the service) we

<sup>1</sup> According to the Spanish documents it was the townspeople who rallied to their *alcalde* (civil authority), and beat Drake back. There was no garrison there at the time. These colonials, however, were used to arms and were not without some military organization and training. They were the raw material of which later centuries were to make "insurgents" and *guerrillero* "patriots." In fine, better men in their own terrain than regulars.

came to the push of pike, so that our fire-pikes being well armed and made of purpose, did us very great service. For our men with their Pikes and short weapons in short time tooke such order among these Gallants, some using the butt-end of their Peeces in stead of other weapons, that partly by reason of our arrowes, which did us there notable service, partly by occasion of this strange and suddaine closing with them, in this manner unlooked for, and the rather for that at the very instant our Captaines brother, with the other Company, with their fire-pikes, entred the market place by the easter street, they, casting downe their weapons, fled all out of the Towne by the gate aforesaid, which had beene built for a barre to keepe out of the Towne the *Symerons*, who had often assailed it, but now served for a gap for the Spaniards to flye at.

In following and returning, divers of our men were hurt, with the weapons which the enemy had let fall as hee fled, somewhat for that we marched with such speed, but more for that they lay so thicke and crosse on the other.

Being returned, wee made our stand neere the midst of the market place, where a tree groweth hard by the crosse; whence our Captaine sent some of our men to stay the ringing of the alarme Bell, which had continued all this while; but the Church being very strongly built and fast shut, they could not without firing (which our Captaine forbad) get into the steeple where the Bell hung.

In the meanetime, our Captaine having taken two or three Spaniards in their flight, commanded them to shew them the Governours house, where he under-(p. 13)stood was the ordinarie place of unlading the Moyles of all the treasure which came from *Panamah* by the Kings appointment, although the silver onely was kept there, the gold, pearle and jewels (being there once entred by the Kings Officer) was carried from thence to the Kings treasure-house not farre off, being a house very strongly built of lime and stone, for the safe keeping thereof.

At our coming to the Governours house, we found the great doore (where the Moyles do usually unlade) even then

opened, a Candle lighted upon the top of the stayers; and a faire Gennet readie saddled, either for the Governour himselfe, or some other of his household to carry it after him. By meanes of this light, we saw a huge heape of silver, in that nether roome: being a pile of barres of silver, of (as neere as we could guesse) seventie foote in length, of ten foot in breadth, and twelve foot in hight, piled up against the wall. Each barre was betweene thirty five and fortie pound in weight. At sight hereof our Captaine commanded straightly that none of us should touch a barre of silver, but stand upon our weapons, because the Towne was full of people, and there was in the Kings treasure-house neere the waters side, more gold & jewels then all our foure Pinnaces would carrie, which we would presently set some in hand to breake open, notwithstanding the Spaniards reports of the strength of it<sup>1</sup>.

We were no sooner returned to our strength, but there was a report brought by some of our men that our Pinnaces were in danger to be taken, and that if we our selves got not aboard before day, wee should be opprest with multitudes both of Souldiers and townes-people. This report had his ground from one *Diego a Negro*, who in the time of the first conflict came and called to our Pinnaces, to know whether they were

<sup>1</sup> The student will find it difficult to reconcile this paragraph with Spanish usages of the time and place. It was July, 1572. The armada had left for Spain some weeks before, presumably taking with it what treasure had been sent down for lading. Diego Flores and the next armada were not to arrive until the following January; and not until then would more treasure be sent to Nombre de Dios. The Spaniards were not so foolish as to leave bullion in storage in a place so menaced by both sea and land as was Nombre de Dios. That there might, however, have been some silver there is less impossible to believe than that gold and jewels in any quantity were stored in a royal warehouse by the sea. Not until word came that the galleons were actually in the harbour of Nombre de Dios to receive it, was such treasure ever sent down from Panama; indeed, not until advices had been received that the fleet and armada were expected was the bullion even started upon its way from Peru (some, of course, came from nearer points).

It is possible that Drake saw some silver and truly believed that gold and jewels were at hand. He must have supposed it, or he would hardly have attacked the town at all. It is conceivable that this paragraph was somewhat burnished up for the benefit of "dull or effeminate" readers to encourage them to further "noble" effort to lay hands on such booty.

Captaine *Drakes?* and upon answer received continued in-treating to be taken aboard (p. 14) (though he had first three or foure shot made at him) untill at length they fetcht him and learned by him that not past eight dayes before our arrivall the King had sent thither some hundred and fiftie Souldiers<sup>1</sup> to guard the Towne against the *Symerons*, and the Towne at this time was full of people besides; which all the rather beleevd, because it agreed with the report of the Negroes which we tooke before at the Ile of *Pinos*. And therefore our Captaine sent his brother and *John Oxnam* to understand the truth thereof. They found our men, which we left in our Pinnaces, much frighted by reason that they saw great Troopes and companies running up and downe, with matches light, some with other weapons, crying *Que gente? que gente?*<sup>2</sup> which having not beene at the first conflict but comming from the utter ends of the towne (being at least as bigge as *Plimouth*) came many times neere us, and, understanding that we were English, discharged their peeeces and ran away.

Presently after this a mightie shower of raine with a terrible storme of thunder and lightning fell, which powred downe so vehemently (as it usually doth in those Countries) that before we could recover the shelter of a certaine shade, or pent-house, at the Wester end of the Kings treasure-house (which seemeth to have beene built there of purpose to avoid Sunne and raine) some of our bow-strings were wet, and some of our match and powder hurt, which, while wee were carefull of to re-furnish and supply, divers of our men, harping on the reports lately brought us, were muttering of the Forces of the Towne, which our Captaine perceiving, told them that he had brought them to the mouth of the treasure of the world, if they would want it, they might hencefoorth blame no bodie but themselves. And therefore as soone as the storme beganne to assuage of his furie (which was (p. 15) a

<sup>1</sup> According to Documents Nos. 17, 20, 21, 23 there were few people in the town when Drake attacked; the defence devolved upon panic-stricken civilians, and not until later (Documents Nos. 25, 31) were soldiers sent to protect the place.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "What people?"



long halfe houre), willing to give his men no longer leasure to demurre of those doubts, nor yet allow the Enemie farther respit to gather themselves together, hee stept forward, commanding his brother, with *John Oxnam* and the Companie appointed them, to breake the Kings Treasure-house; the rest to follow him, to keepe the strength of the market place till they had dispatched the businesse for which they came.

But as hee stept forward, his strength and sight and speech failed him, and hee began to faint for want of bloud, which as then we perceived, had, in greate quantitie, issued upon the sand, out of a wound received in his legge in the first incounter, whereby though hee felt some paine, yet (for that he perceived divers of the Company, having already gotten many<sup>2</sup> good things, to be very readie to take all occasions of winding themselves out of that conceited danger) would he not have it knowne to any, till this his fainting, against his will, bewrayed it; the bloud having first filled the verie prints which our foot-steps made, to the great dismay of all our Companie, who thought it not credible that one man should be able to spare so much bloud and live.

And therefore even they which were willingest to have adventured most, for so faire a bootie would in no case hazard their Captaines life; but (having given him somewhat to drinke wherewith he recovered himselfe, and having bound his Scarfe about his legge, for the stopping of the bloud) entreated him to be content to go with them aboard, there to have his wound searched and drest, and then to returne a shoare againe if he thought good.

This when they could not perswade him unto (as who knew it utterly impossible, at least verie unlikely, that ever they should (for that) returne againe, to recover the (p. 16) state in which they now were, and was of opinion that it were more honourable for himselfe to jeopard his life for so great a benefit, then to leave off so high an enterprise unperformed) they joyned altogether, and with force mingled with faire

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Document No. 21, statement that the English obtained some booty from the town.

intreatie, they bare him aboard his Pinnace, and so abandoned a most rich spoile for the present, onely to preserve their Captaines life, as being resolved of him that while they enjoyed his presence, and had him to command them, they might recover wealth sufficient; but if once they lost him, they should hardly be able to recover home, no not with that which they had gotten already.

Thus we imbarqued by breake of the day, having, besides *July 29.* our Captaine, manie of our men wounded, though none slaine but one Trumpeter, whereupon though our Chyrurgeons were busily employed in providing remedies and salves for their wounds yet the maine care of our Captaine was respected by all the rest; so that before we departed out of the Harbour, for the more comfort of our Companie, wee tooke the aforesaid Ship of Wines without great resistance. But before wee had her free off the Haven, they of the Towne had made meanes to bring one of their Culverins, which we had dismounted, so as they made a shot at us, but hindered not us from carrying forth the prize to the Ile *Bastimientes*, or *The Ile of Victuales*, which is an Iland that lieth without the Bay to the Westwards, about a league off the Towne, where we stayed the two next dayes, to cure our wounded men, and to refresh ourselves in the goodly Gardens which we there found, abounding with great store of all daintie rootes and fruites, besides great plentie of Poulterie and other Fowles, no lesse strange then delicate.

Shortly upon our first arrivall in this Iland, the Governour and the rest of his assistants in the Towne (as we (p. 17) afterwards understood) sent unto our Captaine a proper Gentleman of meane stature, good complexion, and faire spoken, a principall Souldier of the late sent Garrison, to view in what state wee were. At his comming he protested he came to us of meere good will, for that wee had attempted so great and incredible a matter with so few men; and that at the first they feared that we had beene French, at whose hands they knew they should find no mercie, but after they perceived by our Arrows that wee were Englishmen their feares were the lesse, for that they knew that though wee

tooke the Treasure of the place yet wee would not use crueltie towards their persons.

But albeit this his affection gave him cause enough to come aboard such, whose vertues he so honoured, yet the Governour also had not only consented to his comming but directly sent him, upon occasion that divers of the Towne affirmed (said he) that they knew our Captaine, who the last two yeeres had beene often on their Coast, and had alwayes used their persons very well. And therefore desired to know, first, whether our Captaine were the same Captaine *Drake* or no? and next, because many of their men were wounded with our Arrowes, whether they were poysoned or no? And how their wounds might best bee cured? Lastly, what victuals wee wanted, or other necessities? Of which the Governour promised by him to supply and furnish us, as largely as hee durst. Our Captaine, although hee thought this Souldier but a Spie, yet used him very courteously, and answered him to his Governours demands that he was the same *Drake* whom they meant; it was never his manner to poyson his Arrowes; they might cure their wounded by ordinary Chirurgerie; as for wants, he knew the Iland of *Bastimentos* had sufficient, and could furnish him if he listed, but (p. 18) he wanted nothing but some of that speciall commodity, which that Countrey yeilded, to content himselfe and his Company. And therefore he advised the Governour to hold open his eyes, for before hee departed, if God lent him life and leave, hee meant to reape some of their Harvest, which they get out of the Earth, and send into *Spaine* to trouble all the Earth.

To this answer unlooked for, this Gentleman replied: If he might without offence move such a question, what should then bee the cause of our departing from that Towne at this time, where was above three hundred and sixtie Tun of silver readie for the Fleet, and much more Gold in value, resting in Iron Chests in the Kings Treasure-house? But when our Captaine had shewed him the true cause of his unwilling retreat aboard he acknowledged that wee had no lesse reason in departing then courage in attempting, and no doubt did

easily see that it was not for the Towne to seeke revenge of us, by manning forth such Frigates or other vessels as they had, but better to content themselves and provide for their owne defence.

Thus with great favour and courteous entertainment, besides such gifts from our Captaine as most contented him, after dinner he was in such sort dismissed, to make report of that he had seene, that he protested hee was never so much honoured of any in his life.

After his departure, the Negroe fore-mentioned, being examined more fully, confirmed this report of the Gold and Silver, with many other intelligences of importance, especially how we might have Gold and Silver enough if wee would, by meanes of the *Symerons*, whom though he had betrayed divers times (being used thereto by his Masters) so that hee knew they would kill him, if they gat him, yet if our Captaine would undertake his (p. 19) protection, he durst adventure his life, because he knew our Captaines name was most pretious and highly honoured of them.

This report ministred occasion to further consultation: for which, because this place seemed not the safest, as being neither the healthiest nor quietest, the next day in the morning we all set our course for the Ile of *Pinnos* or *Port Plentie*, where we had left our Ships, continuing all that day, and the next, till towards night, before we recovered it.

We were the longer in this course, for that our Captaine sent away his brother and *Ellis Hixon* to the westward, to search the River of *Chagro*, where himselfe had beene the yeere before, and yet was carefull to gaine more notice of, it being a River which tendeth to the Southward, within six leagues of *Panamah*, where is a little towne called *Venta Cruz*, whence all the treasure, that was usually brought thither from *Panamah* by Moyles, was imbarqued in Frigates<sup>1</sup>, downe the River into the North sea, and so to *Nombre de Dios*. It ebbeth and floweth not farre into the land, and therefore it asketh three dayes rowing with a fine Pinnace to passe from the

<sup>1</sup> Again, the English were misinformed: the plate was sent overland, as the narrative makes obvious later.

mouth to *Venta Cruz*, but one day and a night serveth to returne downe the River.

- Aug. 1.* At our returne to our Ships, in our consultation, Captaine *Rause* forecasting divers doubts of our safe continuance upon that coast, being now discovered, was willing to depart; and our Captaine no lesse willing to dismisse him. And therefore as soone as our Pinnaces returned from *Chagro*, with such  
*Aug. 7.* advertisements as they were sent for, about eight dayes before Captaine *Rause* tooke his leave, leaving us in the Ile aforesaid, where wee had remained five or six dayes.

In which meane time, having put all things in a readinesse, our Captaine resolved with his two Ships and three Pinnaces to goe to (p. 20) *Carthagene*, whither in sayling we spent some sixe dayes, by reason of the calmes which came often upon us; but all this time we attempted nothing that wee might have done by the way, neither at *Tolou* nor otherwhere, because we would not be discovered.

- Aug. 13.* We came to anchor with our two ships in the evening in seven fadome water, betweene the Ilands of *Charesha* and Saint *Barnards*. Our Captaine led the three Pinnaces about the Iland, into the Harbour of *Carthagene* where, at the very entry, hee found a Frigate at anchor, aboard which was onely one old man; who, being demanded where the rest of his company was, answered that they were gone ashore in their Gundeloe that evening, to fight about a Mistris, and voluntarily related to our Captaine that two houres before night there past by them a Pinnace<sup>1</sup>, with Sayle and Oares, as fast as ever they could row, calling to him whether there had not beene any *English* or *Frenchmen* there lately? And upon answer that there had beene none, they bid them looke to themselves: that within an houre that this Pinnace was come to the utterside of *Carthagene* there were many great Peeeces shot off, whereupon one going to top, to descry what might be the cause, Espied, over the Land, divers Frigates and small shipping bringing themselves within the Castle.

This report our Captaine credited, the rather for that himselfe had heard the report of the Ordnance at Sea, and

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 17 states that Cartagena was warned.

perceived sufficiently that hee was now descryed. Notwithstanding, in farther examination of this olde Mariner, having understood that there was, within the next point, a great ship of Sivell, which had here discharged her loding, and rid now with her yards acrosse, being bound the next morning for Saint *Domingo*, our Captaine tooke this old man into his Pinnace to verifie (p. 21) that which he had informed, and rowed towards this Ship, which, as we came neere it, hailed us, asking whence our Shallops were? We answered, from *Nombre de Dios*. Straight way they railed and reviled. We gave no heed to their words, but every Pinnace according to our Captaines order (one on the starboord bough, the other on the starboord quarter, and the Captaine in the midship on the starboord side), forthwith boarded her, though wee had some difficultie to enter, by reason of her height, being of two hundred fortie Tunne. But as soone as we entred upon the decks, we threw downe the gates and spardecks, to prevent the *Spaniards* from annoying us with their close fights; who, then perceiving that we were possessed of their Ship, stowed themselves all in hold with their weapons, except two or three yonkers, who were found afore the beetes. When, having light out of our Pinnaces, we found no danger of the enemy remaining, we cut their Cables at halfe, and with our three Pinnaces, towed her without the Iland, into the sound right afore the Towne, without danger of their great shot<sup>1</sup>.

Meane while the Towne, having intelligence hereof by their watch, tooke th'alarme, rung out their Bels, shot off about thirtie Peeeces of great Ordinance, put all their men in a readinesse horse and foote, came downe to the very point of the wood, and discharged their Calivers, to impeach us if they might in going forth.

The next morning our Ships tooke two Frigates, in which Aug. 14. were two, who called themselves the Kings *Scrivanos*, the one of *Carthagene*, th'other of *Veragua*, with seven Marriners and two Negroes, who had beene at *Nombre de Dios* and were now bound for *Ca[r]thagene*, with double letters of advise, to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Document No. 18.

certifie them that Captaine *Drake* had beene at *Nombre de Dios*, had taken it, and had it not beene that hee was hurt with some blessed shot, by all (p. 22) likelihood he had sackt it; he was yet still upon the Coast: they should therefore carefully prepare for him.

After that our Captaine had brought all his fleet together, at the *Scrivanos* entreaties he was content to doe them all favour, in setting them and all their companies ashore; and so bare thence with the Ilands of Saint *Bernards*, about three leagues off the towne, where we found great store of fish for our refreshing.

Here our Captaine considering that he was now discovered upon two of the cheefest places of all the Coast, and yet not meaning to leave it till hee had found the *Simerons* and made his voyage as hee had conceived, which would require some length of time, and sure manning of his Pinnaces, hee determined with himselfe to burne one of his Ships and make of the other a storehouse, that his Pinnaces (which could not otherwise) might be thoroughly man'd, and so hee might be able to abide any time. But knowing the affection of his company, how loath they were to leave either of their Ships, being both so good Saylers and so well furnished, hee purposed in himselfe by some policie to make them most willing to effect that he intended. And therefore sent for one *Thomas Moone* (who was Carpenter in the *Swanne*) and taking him into his Cabin, chargeth him to conceale for a time a piece of service which he must in any case consent to doe aboard his owne Ship; that was, in the middle of the second watch to go downe secretly into the well of the Ship, and with a great spike-gimlet, to boare three hoales, as neere the keele as hee could, and lay something against it, that the force of the water entring might make no great noise, nor be discovered by boyling up. *Thomas Moone* at the hearing hereof being utterly dismaied, desired to know what cause there might be to move him to sincke so good a Barke (p. 23) of his owne, new, and strong, and that by his meanes who had beene in two so rich and gainefull voyages in her with himselfe heretofore. If his brother, the Master, and the rest of the company

should know of such his fact, he thought verily they would kill him. But when our Captaine had imparted to him his causes, and had perswaded him with promise that it should not be knowne till all of them should be glad of it, he undertooke it, and did it accordingly.

The next morning our Captaine tooke his Pinnace verie Aug. 15. early, purposing to go a fishing (for that there is verie great store in all the Coast), and falling a boord the *Swanne*, calleth for his brother to go with him, who, rising suddenly, answereth that he would follow presently, or if it would please him to stay a verie little, he would attend him. Our Captaine preceiving the feate wrought, would not hasten him, but in rowing away demanded of them why their Barke was so deepe, as making no account of it; but by occasion of this demand his brother sent one downe to the Steward to know whether there were any water in the Ship, or what other cause might be. The Steward hastily stepping downe at his usuall skuttle was wet up to the waste, and shifting with more haste to come up againe as if the water had followed him, cried out that the Ship was full of water. There was no neede to hasten the companie, some to pumpe, others to search for the leake, which the Captaine of the Barke, seeing they did on all hands verie willingly, he followed his brother, and certified him of the strange chance befallne them that night, that whereas they had not pumpt twice in sixe weekes before, now they had sixe foote water in hold; therefore he desireth leave from attending him in fishing, to attend (p. 24) the search and remedie of the leake. And when our Captaine with his companie profered to go to helpe them, he answered they had men enough aboard, and prayed him to continue his fishing, that they might have some part of it for their dinner. Thus returning, he found his companie had taken great paines but had freed the water verie little. Yet such was their love to the Barke (as our Captaine well knew) that they ceased not, but to the utmost of their strength laboured all that they might till three in the afternoone. By which time the companie perceiving that, though they had beene relieved by our Captaine himselfe and many of his companie, yet they were



not able to free above a foote and a halfe of water, and could have no likelihood of finding the leake, had now a lesse liking of her then before, and greater content to heare of some means for remedie. Whereupon our Captaine, consulting with them what they thought best to bee done, found that they had more desire to have all as hee thought fit, then judgement to conceive any meanes of remedie. And therefore he propounded that himselfe would goe into the Pinnace till hee could provide some handsome Frigate, and that his brother should be Captaine in the admirall, and the Master should also be there placed with him, instead of this; which seeing they could not save, he would have fired, that the enemy might never recover her, but first all the Pinnaces should be brought aboard her, that every one might take out of her whatsoever they lackt or liked. This, though the company at the first marveled at, yet presently it was put in execution and performed that night. Our Captaine had his desire, and men enough for his Pinnaces.

*Aug. 16.* The next morning we resolved to seeke out some fit place in the sound of *Dorrienne*<sup>1</sup>, where we might safely leave our Ship at Ancor, not discoverable by the enemy, (p. 25) who thereby might imagine us quite departed from the Coast, and we the meane time better follow our purposes with our Pinnaces; of which our Captaine would himselfe take two to *Rio Grande*, and the third leave with his brother to seeke the *Symerons*.

*Aug. 21.* Upon this resolution, we set saile presently for the sayd Sound, which within five dayes we recovered, abstaining of purpose from all such occasion as might hinder our determination, or bewray our being upon the Coast. As soone as we arrived where our Captaine intended, and had chosen a fit and convenient road (out of all trade) for our purpose, we reposed our selves there for some fiftene dayes, keeping our selves close, that the bruite of our being upon the Coast might cease.

But in the meane time wee were not idle, for besides such ordinarie workes, as our Captaine everie moneth did usually

<sup>1</sup> The Gulf of Darien (Uraba).

inure us to, about the trimming and fitting of his Pinnaces, for their better sailing and rowing, hee caused us to rid a large plot of ground, both of Trees and Brakes, and to build us houses, sufficient for all our lodging, and one especially for all our publike meetings, wherein the Negro which fled to us before did us great service, as being well acquainted with the Countrey, and their meanes of building. Our Archers made themselves Butts to shoot at, because wee had many that delighted in that Exercise, and wanted not a Fletcher to keepe our Bowes and Arrowes in order. The rest of the company, everie one as hee liked best, made his disport at Bowles, Quoits, Keiles<sup>1</sup>, &c. For our Captaine allowed one halfe of their company to passe their time thus, everie other day interchangeably, the other halfe being enjoined to the necessarie workes about our Ship and Pinnaces, and the providing of fresh victuall, Fish, Fowle, Hogs, Deere, Conies, &c., whereof there is great (p. 26) plentie. Here our Smiths set up their Forge, as they used, being furnished out of *England* with Anvill, Iron, Coales, and all manner of necessaries, which stood us in great stead.

At the end of these fiteene dayes our Captaine, leaving his Ship in his brothers charge, to keepe all things in order, Sept. 5. himselfe tooke with him, according to his former determination, two Pinnaces for *Rio Grand*, and passing by *Carthagene*, but out of sight, when wee were within two Sept. 8. leagues of the River, wee landed to the Westwards on the maine, where we saw great store of Cattle. There we found some Indians who, asking us in friendly sort, in broken *Spanish*, what we would have, and understanding that we desired fresh victuals in traffique, they tooke such Cattle for us as we needed, with ease and so readily as if they had a speciall commandment over them, whereas they would not abide us to come neere them. And this also they did willingly, because our Captaine (according to his custome) contented them for their paines with such things as they account greatly of, in such sort that they promised wee should have there of them at any time, what we would.

<sup>1</sup> Skittles.

The same day we departed thence to *Rio Grand*, where wee entred about three of the clocke in the after-noone. There are two entrings into this River, of which wee entred the Westermost called *Boca chica*. The freshet of this River is so great that we, being halfe a league from the mouth of it, filled fresh water for our beverage.

From three a clocke till darke night we rowed up the streame, but the current was so strong downewards that wee got but two leagues all that time. Wee moared our Pinnaces to a tree that night, for that presently, with the closing of the evening, there fell a monstrous shower of raine, with such strange and terrible claps of thunder and (p. 27) flashes of lightning, as made us not a little to marvell at, although our Captaine had beene acquainted with such like in that Countrey, and told us that they continue seldom longer then three quarters of an houre. This storme was no sooner ceast, but it became verie calme, and therewith there came such an innumerable multitude of a kind of flies of that Countrey called *Muskitos* (like our Gnats) which bite so spitefully that wee could not rest all that night, nor finde meanes to defend our selves from them, by reason of the heat of the Countrey. The best remedy we then found against them was the juyce of Lymons.

Sept. 9. At the breake of day we departed, rowing in the eddy, and haling up by the trees where the eddy failed, with great labour, by spels, without ceasing, each company their halfe houre glasse, without meeting any, till about three a clock after noone, by which time we could get but five leagues a head. Then we espied a Canow with two Indians fishing in the River; but we spake not to them, lest so we might be descryed: nor they to us, as taking us to be Spanyards. But within an houre after we espied certaine houses on the other side of the River, whose channell is twentie five fathome deepe, and his bredth so great that a man can scantly be discerned from side to side. Yet a Spanyard which kept those houses had espied our Pinnaces and, thinking we had been his Country-men, made a smoake, for a signall to turne that way, as being desirous to speake with us. After that we,

espying this smoak, had made with it, and were halfe the River over, he wheaved us with his hat, and his long hanging sleeves to come a shoare. But as we drew neerer unto him hee discerned that we were not those he looked for. He took his heeles, & fled from his houses, which we found to be five in number, all full of white Ruske, dried Bacon, that Country Cheese (like Holland Cheese in fashion, but farre more delicate (p. 28) in taste, of which they send into *Spaine* as speciall Presents), many sorts of sweet meats and Con-serves, with great store of sugar, being provided to serve the Fleet returning to *Spaine*.

With this store of victuals we loaded our Pinnaces and by the shutting in of the day we were ready to depart; for that wee hastned the rather by reason of an intelligence given us by certaine Indian Women which wee found in those houses, that the Frigates (these are ordinarily thirtie or upwards, which usually transport the merchandise sent out of *Spaine* to *Carthagene*, from thence to these houses, and so in great Canoas up hence into *Nueva Reyno*, for which the River, running many hundred leagues within the land, serveth verie fitly, and returne in exchange the gold and treasure, silver, victuals and commodities which that Kingdome yeeldeth abundantly) were not yet returned from *Carthagene*, since the first alarum they tooke of our being there.

As wee were going aboard our Pinnaces from these Store-Sept. 10. houses, the Indians of a great Towne called *Villa del Rey*, some two miles distant from the waters side where wee landed, were brought downe by the *Spanyards* into the bushes and shot their arrowes; but we rowed downe the streame, with the current (for that the winde was against us) onely one league, and because it was night anchored till the morning, when wee rowed downe to the mouth of the River, where wee unladed all our provisions and clesed our Pinnaces, according to our Captaines custome, and tooke it in againe, and the same day went to the Westward.

In this returne we descried a Ship, a Barke, and a Frigate, of which the Ship and Frigate went for *Carthagene*, but the Barke was bound to the Northwards, with the winde Easterly,

so that wee imagined shee had some (p. 29) gold or treasure going for *Spaine*. Therefore we gave her chase, but taking her and finding nothing of importance in her, understanding that she was bound for Sugar and Hides, we let her goe, and, having a good gale of winde, continued our former course to our Ship and company.

*Sept. 11.* In the way betweene *Carthagene* and *Tolou* wee tooke five or sixe Frigates, which were laden from *Tolou* with live Hogs, Hens and Maiz, which we call Guynie wheate. Of these having gotten what intelligence they could give of their preparations for us, and divers opinions of us, was dismissed all the men, onely staying two Frigates with us because they were so well stored with good victualls.

Within three dayes after we arrived at the place which our Captaine chose at first to leave his Ship in, which was called by our Companie *Port-plentie*, by reason wee brought in thither continually all manner store of good victualls, which we tooke going that way by Sea, for the victualling of *Carthagene* and *Nombre de Dios*, as also the Fleetes going and comming out of *Spaine*, so that if we had beene two thousand, yea three thousand persons, wee might with our Pinnaces easily have provided them sufficient victuall of Wine, Meale, Ruske, Cassavy (a kinde of Bread made of a roote called *Yucca*, whose juyce is poyson, but the substance good and wholesome), dried Beefe, dried Fish, live Sheepe, live Hogs, aboundance of Hens, besides the infinite store of daintie Fish very easily to be taken every day.

Insomuch that we were forced to build foure severall Magazines or store-houses, some tenne, some twentie leagues a sunder, some in Ilands, some in the maine, providing our selves in divers places, that though the Enemie should with force surprise any one, yet we might be sufficiently furnished, till we had made our voyage as wee did hope. In building of these, our Negroes helpe was very much, as having a (p. 30) speciall skill in the speedy erection of such houses. This our store was such, as thereby we releevd not onely our selves and the *Symerons*, while they were with us, but also two French Ships in extreme want.

For in our absence Captaine *John Drake*, having one of our Pinnaces as was appointed, went in with the maine, and as he rowed a loofe the shoare, where he was directed by *Diego*, the Negroe aforesaid, which willingly came unto us at *Nombre de Dios*, hee espied certaine of the *Symerons*, with whome he dealt so effectually that in conclusion he left two of our men with their Leader, and brought aboard two of theirs, agreeing that they should meete him againe the next day, at a River midway betweene the *Cabezas* and our Ships, which they named *Rio Diego*<sup>1</sup>.

These two being very sensible men, chosen out by their Commander, did with all reverence and respect declare unto our Captaine that their Nation conceived great joy of his arrivall, because they knew him to be an enemy to the *Spaniards*, not onely by his late being in *Nombre de Dios*, but also by his former voyages; and therefore were ready to assist and favour his enterprises against his and their Enemies to the uttermost. And to that end their Captaine and Companie did stay at this present neere the mouth of *Rio Diego*, to attend what answer and order should be given them: that they would have marched by land, even to this place, but that the way is verie long, and more troublesome by reason of many steepe Mountaines, deepe Rivers and thicke brakes. Desiring therefore, that it might please our Captaine to take some order, as he thought best, with all convenient speed in this behalfe.

Our Captaine, considering the speech of these persons, and weighing it with his former intelligences (had not onely by Negroes but Spaniards also, (p. 31) whereof he was alwayes very carefull), as also conferring it with his brothers informations of the great kindnesse that they shewed him being lately with them, after hee had heard the opinions of those of best service with him, what were fittest to be done presently, resolved himselfe with his brother and the two *Symerons*, in his two Pinnaces to go toward this River, as he did the same

<sup>1</sup> That is, between Pine Island and Cape San Blas. Apparently Fort Diego was a little farther up yet upon that coast, perhaps well within San Blas Bay (off the Diabolo or Pedro Mandinga River?). Cf. pp. 281, 291, *post*.

evening; giving order that the Ship and the rest of his Fleet should the next morning follow him, because there was a place of as great safetie and sufficiencie, which his brother had found out neere the River. The safetie of it consisted, not onely in that which is common all along that coast from *Tolou* to *Nombre de Dios*, being above sixty leagues, that it is a most goodly and plentifull Countrey, and yet inhabited not with one Spaniard, or any for the Spaniards, but especially in that it lieth among a great many of goodly Ilands<sup>1</sup> full of Trees, where, though there be channels, yet there are such Rockes and shoales that no man can enter by night, without great danger, nor by day without discovery, whereas our Ship might lie hidden within the Trees.

*Sept. 14.* The next day we arrived at this River appointed, where we found the *Symerons* according to promise. The rest of their number were a mile up in a wood by the rivers side. There, after we had given them entertainment and received good testimonies of their joy and good will towards us, we tooke two more of them into our Pinnaces, leaving our two men with the rest of theirs, to march by land to another River called *Rio Guana*, with intent there to meete with another Companie of *Symerons*, which were now in the Mountaines.

So we departed that day from *Rio Diego*, with our Pinnaces towards our Ship, as marvelling that she followed us not as *Sept. 16.* was appointed. But two dayes after, we found her in the place where (p. 32) we left her, but in farre other state, being much spoyled, and in great danger, by reason of a tempest she had in our absence.

*Sept. 18.* As soone as we could trimme our Shippe, being some two dayes, our Captaine sent away one of his Pinnaces towards the bottome of the Bay, amongst the shoales and sandy Ilands, to sound out the channell for the bringing in of our Ship neerer the maine.

*Sept. 19.* The next day we followed, and were with warie pilatage directed safely into the best channell, with much adoe to recover the Roade, among so many flats and shoales. It was

<sup>1</sup> Obviously the islands of the *Mulatas* Archipelago.

neere about five leagues from the *Cativaas*, betwixt an Iland and the maine, where we moored our Ship. The Iland was not above foure Cables length from the maine, being in quantitie some three Acres of ground, flat and very full of trees and bushes.

We were forced to spend the best part of three dayes, after our departure from our *Port-plentie*, before wee were quiet in the new-found Roade, which we had but newly entred when our two men and the former Troupe of *Simerons*, with twelve other whom they had met in the Mountaines, came in sight over against our Ship, on the maine, whence we set them all aboard to their greate comfort and our content, they rejoycing that they should have some fit opportunity to wreake their wrongs on the Spaniards, we hoping that now our voyage should be bettered. Sept. 22.  
Sept. 23.

At our first meeting, when our Captaine had moved them to shew him the meanes which they had to furnish him with gold and silver, they answered plainely that had they knowne gold had beene his desire they could have satisfied him with store, which for the present they could not do, because the Rivers, in which they had suncke great store which they had taken from the (p. 33) Spaniards, rather to despise them then for love of gold, were now so high, that they could not get it out of such depths for him, and because the Spaniards in these rainy moneths doe not use to carrie their treasure by land<sup>1</sup>.

This answer although it were somewhat unlooked for yet nothing discontented us, but rather perswaded us farther of their honest and faithfull meaning towards us. Therefore our Captaine, to entertaine these five moneths, commanded all our Ordnance and Artillerie a shoare, with all our other provisions, sending his Pinnaces to the maine, to bring over great trees, to make a Fort upon the same Iland, for the planting of all our Ordnance therein, and for our safeguard, if the Enemy in all this time should chance to come.

<sup>1</sup> The second statement was certainly true; if it surprised the English, this is further evidence that they were not well informed concerning the country and the Spaniards' customs.



*Sept. 24.* Our *Symerons* cut downe *Palmito* boughes and branches, and with wonderfull speed raised up two large houses for all our Company<sup>1</sup>. Our Fort was then made (by reason of the place) triangle wise with maine timber and earth, of which the Trench yeelded us good store, so that we made it thirteene foot in height.

*Oct. 7.* But after we had continued upon this Iland foureteene dayes, our Captaine, having determined with three Pinnaces to goe for *Carthagene*, left his brother *John Drake* to governe these who remained behinde with the *Symerons*, to finish the Fort which hee had begun. For which he appointed him to fetch boords and plancks, as many as his Pinnacle would carrie, from the prize which wee tooke at *Rio Grand* and left at the *Cativaas*, where shee drave a shore and wracked, in our absence, but now shee might serve verie commodiously to supply our uses, in making Platformes for our Ordnance. Thus our Captaine and his brother tooke their leave, the one to the Eastward, and the other to the *Cativaas*.

That night wee came to an Ile, which hee called (p. 34) *Spurkite* Iland, because we found there great store of such a kinde a bird in shape, but verie delicate, of which wee killed and rosted many, staying there till the next day mid-noone

*Oct. 8.* when we departed thence. And about foure a clocke recovered a big Iland in our way, where we stayed all night, by reason that there was great store of fish, and especially of a great kind of shell-fish of a foot long. We called them *Whelkes*.

*Oct. 9.* The next morning we were cleere of these Ilands and

*Oct. 13.* Shoales, and haled off into the Sea. About foure dayes after, neere the Ilands of Saint *Bernards*, wee chased two Frigates

*Oct. 14, 15* a shore and, recovering one of the Ilands, made our abode there some two dayes, to wash our Pinnaces and rake of the fish.

*Oct. 16.* Thence wee went towards *Tolou* and that day landed neere the Towne in a garden, where wee found certaine *Indians*, who delivered us their bowes and arrowes and gathered for us such fruit as the Garden did yeeld, being many sorts of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Document No. 21, regarding the English "settlement."

daintie fruits and roots, still contenting them for that we received. Our Captaines principall intent in taking this and other places by the way, not being for any other cause but onely to learne true intelligences of the state of the Countrey and of the Fleets.

Hence we departed presently, and rowed towards *Charesha*, the Iland of *Carthagene*, and entred in at *Bocha Chica*; and having the winde large wee sailed in towards the Citie, and let fall our Grappers betwixt the Iland and the maine, right over against the goodly Garden Iland in which our Captaine would not suffer us to land, notwithstanding our importunate desire, because hee knew it might be dangerous, for that they are wont to send Souldiers thither when they know any men of warre upon the Coast, which we found accordingly, for within three houres after, passing by the point of the Iland, wee had a (p. 35) volley of an hundred shot from them, and yet there was but one of our men hurt.

This evening wee departed to Sea, and the day following, *Oct. 17.* being some two leagues off the Harbour, wee tooke a Barke, and found that the Captaine and his wife with the better sort of the passengers had forsaken her, and were gone a shore in their Gundelow; by occasion whereof wee boorded without resistance, though they were verie well provided with swords and targets, and some small shot, besides foure iron Bases. She was about fiftie Tunne, having ten Mariners, five or six Negroes, great store of sope and sweet meats, bound from *Saint Domingo* to *Carthagene*. This Captaine left behinde him a silke Ancient with his Armes, as might be thought in hastie departing. The next day we sent all the company a shore to *Oct. 18.* seeke their Masters, saving a young Negrito of three or foure yeeres old, which we brought away, but kept the Barke, and in her, bore into the mouth of *Carthagene* Harbour, where we anchored.

That afternoon, certaine horse-men came downe to the point by the Wood side, and with the *Scrivano* forementioned came towards our Barke with a Flag of Truce, desiring of our Captaine safe conduct for his comming and going. The which being granted, he came aboard us, giving our Captaine great

thanks for his manifold favours, &c., promising that night before day breake to bring as much victuall as they would desire, what shift soever hee made, or what danger soever hee incurr'd of law and punishment. But this fell out to be nothing but a device of the Governour forced upon the *Scrivano*, to delay time, til they might provide themselves of sufficient strength to entrap us, for which this fellow, by his smooth

Oct. 19. speech, was thought a fit meane. So by Sunne rising, (p. 36) when we perceived his words but words, wee put to Sea to the Westward of the Iland, some three leagues off, where we lay at Hull the rest of all that day and night.

Oct. 20. The next day in the afternoon there came out of *Carthagene* two Frigates bound for Saint *Domingo*, the one of fiftie, the other of twelve Tunne, having nothing in them but ballast: we tooke them within a league of the Towne, and came to anchor with them within Saker shot of the East Bulwarke. There were in those Frigates some twelve or thirteene common Mariners, which intreated to be set a shoare; to them our Captaine gave the great Frigates Gundelow, and dismissed them.

Oct. 21. The next morning when they came downe to the Wester point with a flag of Truce, our Captaine manned one of his Pinnaces and rowed a shoare. When we were within a Cables length of the shoare the Spaniards fled, hiding themselves in the Woods, as being afraid of our Ordnance; but indeed to draw us on to land confidently, and to presume of our strength. Our Captaine commanding the Grapnell to be cast out of the sterne, veered the Pinnace a shoare, and as soone as shee touched the sand, hee alone leapt a shoare in their sight, to declare that hee durst set his foot a land, but stayed not among them, to let them know that though hee had not sufficient forces to conquer them, yet hee had sufficient judgement to take heed of them. And therefore perceiving their intent, as soone as our Captaine was aboard, wee haled off upon our Grapner and rid a while.

They presently came forth upon the sand, and sent a youth, as with a message from the Governour, to know what our intent was, to stay thus upon the Coast? Our Captaine

answered, hee meant to traffique with them, for hee had Tin, Pewter, Cloth, and other Merchandise that they needed. The youth swam backe againe with this answer; (p. 37) and was presently returned, with another message that the King had forbidden to traffique with any forraine Nation for any commodities, except Powder and Shot, of which if wee had any store they would be his Marchants. He answered that he was come from his Countrie to exchange his commodities for Gold and Silver, and is not purposed to returne without his errand. They are like (in his opinion) to have little rest, if that by faire meanes they would not traffique with him. He gave this Messenger a faire Shirt for a reward, and so returned him, who rowled his shirt about his head and swamme very speedily.

We heard no answer all that day, and therefore toward night we went aboard our Frigats and reposed our selves, setting and keeping very orderly all that night our watch, with great and small shot.

The next morning the winde, which had beene Westerly in the evening, altered to the Eastward. About the dawning of the day wee espied two Sayles turning towards us, whereupon our Captaine weighed with his Pinnaces, leaving the two Frigates unmand. But when we were come somewhat nigh them the winde calmed, and we were faine to row towards them, till that approching verie nigh we saw many heads peering over boord. For, as we perceived, these two Frigates were mand and set forth out of *Carthagene* to fight with us, and at least to empeach or busie us, whiles by some meanes or other they might recover the Frigates from us; but our Captaine prevented both their drifts.

For commanding *John Oxnam* to stay with the one Pinnace to entertaine these two men of warre, himselfe in the other made such speed that hee gate to his Frigates which he had left at Anchor, and caused the *Spaniards* (who in the meane time had gotten aboard in a small Canow thinking to have (p. 38) towed them within the danger of their shot) to make greater haste thence then they did thither. For he found that in shifting thence, some of them were faine to swim a land

(the Canow not being able to receive them) and had left their apparell, some their Rapiers and Targets, some their Flaskes and Callivers behinde them, although they were towing away of one of them. Therefore considering that we could not man them we suncke the one, burnt the other, giving them to understand by this, that we perceived their secret practises.

*Oct. 22.* This being done, he returned to *John Oxnam*, who all this while lay by the men of warre without proffering of fight. And assoone as our Captaine was come up to these Frigates, the wind blew much from the sea, so that we, by being betwixt the shoare and them, were in a manner forced to beare roome into the Harbor before them, to the great joy of the *Spaniards* who beheld it, in supposing that we would still have fled before them. But assoone as we were in the Harbor, and felt smooth water, our Pinnaces (as we were assured of) getting the winde, we fought with them upon th'advantage, so that after a few shot exchanged, and a storme rising, they were contented to presse no neerer. Therefore as they let fall their Anchors, we presently let drop our Grapners in the winde of them, which the *Spanish* Souldiers seeing, considering the disadvantage of the winde, the likelihood of the storme to continue, and small hope of doing any good, they were glad to retire themselves to the Towne. But by reason of the foule and tempestuous weather, wee rode ther foure dayes, feeling great cold, by reason wee had such sore raines with Westerly winde, and so little succor in our Pinnaces.

*Oct. 27.* The fift day after, there came in a Frigate from the sea, which seeing us make towards her, ranne herselfe a (p. 39) shoare, unhangning her Rudder and taking away her Sayles, that she might not easily be carried away. But when we were come up to her, we perceived about a hundred horse and foote, with their furniture, came downe to the point of the maine, where wee interchanged some shot with them. One of our great shot past so neere a brave Cavaliere<sup>1</sup> of theirs,

<sup>1</sup> Could it have been Martin de Mendoza? Cf. Document No. 18. It will be remarked that the English account of Drake's second call at Cartagena differs widely from that sketched by this Spanish paper. Yet there seems to be no contradiction; Mendoza has simply omitted all that it was not to his purpose to tell.

that thereby they were occasioned to advise themselves, and to retreat into the woods, where they might sufficiently defend and rescue the Frigate from us, and annoy us also, if wee stayed long about her.

Therefore we concluded to go to sea againe, putting forth through *Boca chica*, with intent to take downe our Masts, upon hope of faire wether, and to ride under the Rockes called *Las Serenas*, which are two leagues off at sea, as we had usually done aforetime, so that they could not discerne us from the Rocks. But there the sea was so mightily growne, that we were forced to take the Harbour againe, where wee remained sixe dayes, notwithstanding the *Spaniards*, greeved Nov. 2. greatly at our abode there so long, put an other devise in practise to indanger us.

For they sent forth a great Shallop, a fine Gundeloe, and a great Canow, with certaine *Spaniards* with shot and many *Indians* with poysoned arrowes as it seemed with intent to begin some fight, and then to fly. For assoone as wee rowed towards them and enterchanged shot, they presently retired and went a shoare into the woods, where an Ambush of some sixtie shot were laid for us, besides two Pinnaces and a Frigate warping towards us, which were mand as the rest. They attempted us verie boldly, being assisted by those others which from out of the wood had gotten aboard the Gundelo and Canow, and seeing us bearing from them (which we did in respect of the Ambuscado) (p. 40) they encouraged themselves and assured their fellowes of the day. But our Captaine, weighing this their attempt and being out of danger of their shot from the land, commanding his other Pinnace to be brought a head of him and to let fall their Grapners each a head the others, environed both the Pinnaces with Bonnets, as for a close fight, and then wheaved them aboard them.

They kept themselves upon their Oares at Calliver shot distance, spending powder apace, as we did some two or three houres. We had one of our men onely wounded in that fight. What they had is unknowne to us, but we saw their Pinnaces shot thorow in divers places, and the powder of one of them tooke on fire, whereupon we waighed, intending to beare

roome to over-runne them; which they perceiving, and thinking that we would have boarded them, rowed away amaine to the defence which they had in the wood, the rather because they were disappointed of their helpe that they expected from the Frigate which was warping towards us but by reason of the much winde that blew could not come to offend us, or succour them.

Thus seeing that we were still molested, and no hope remained of any purchase to bee had in this place any longer, because we were now so notably made knowne in those parts, and because our victuals grew scant, as soone as the weather waxed somewhat better (the wind continuing alwayes Westerly, so that we could not returne to our Ships) our Captaine thought best to goe to the Eastward, towards  
*Nov. 3. Rio Grand*, along the Coast, where wee had beene before, and found great store of victuals.

*Nov. 5.* But when after two dayes sayling we were arrived at the Villages of store, where before we had furnished our selves with abundance of Hens, Sheepe, Calves, Hogges, &c., now wee found bare nothing, not so much as any (p. 41) people left, for that they by the Spaniards commandment were fled to the Mountaines, and had driven away all their Cattle, that we might not be releevd by them. Herewith being verie sorrie, because much of our victuall in our Pinnaces was spoiled by the foule weather at Sea and raines in Harbour, a Frigate being descried at Sea revived us and put us in some hope for the time that in her we should finde sufficient; and thereupon it may easily be guessed how much we laboured to recover her, but when we had boarded her and understood that she had neither meat nor money, but that she was bound for *Rio Grand* to take in provision upon bills, our great hope converted into grieve.

Wee endured with our allowance seven or eight dayes more, proceeding to the Eastwards and bearing roome for *Santa Martha*, upon hope to finde some shipping in the Road, or Limpets on the rockes, or succour against the storme in that good Harbour. Being arrived and seeing no shipping, wee anchored under the Wester point, where is high land, and, as

wee thought, free in safetie from the Towne, which is in the bottome of the Bay, not intending to land there, because wee knew that it was fortified, and that they had intelligence of us. But the Spanyards, knowing us to bee Men of warre, and misliking that wee should shroud under their rockes, without their leave, had conveyed some thirtie or fortie shot among the cliffes, which annoyed us so spitefully and so unrevengeably (for that they lay hidden behinde the rockes but wee lay open to them) that wee were soone wearie of our Harbour, and enforced, for all the storme without and want within, to put to Sea, which though these enemies of ours were well contented withall, yet for a farewell, as we came open of the Towne, they sent us a Culverin shot, which made a neere escape; for (p. 42) it fell betweene our Pinnaces as wee were upon conference of what was best to bee done. The Company advised that, if it pleased him, they might put themselves a land some place to the East-ward to get victuals and rather hope for courtesie of the Countrey people then continue at Sea, in so long cold and great a storme in so leake a Pinnace. But our Captaine would in no wise like of that advice. Hee thought it better to beare up towards *Rio de Haca* or *Corizao*<sup>1</sup>, with hope there to have plentie without great resistance, because hee knew either the Ilands were not verie populous or else it were verie likely that there would bee found ships of victuall in a readinesse. The Company of the other Pinnace answered that they would willingly follow him thorow the world, but in this they could not see how either their Pinnace should live in that Sea without being eaten up in that storme, or they themselves able to endure so long time with so slender provision as they had, *viz.* onely one Gammon of Bacon and thirtie pound of Bisket for eightene men. Our Captaine replyed that they were better provided then himselfe was, who had but one Gammon of Bacon and fortie pound of Bisket for his twentie foure men, and therefore hee doubted not but they would take such part as hee did, and willingly depend upon Gods Almightye providence which never faileth them that trust in him. With that he hoysed his fore-saile and

<sup>1</sup> Rio de la Hacha and Curaçao.



set his course for *Corizao*, which the rest perceiving, with sorrowfull hearts in respect of the weake Pinnace, yet desirous to follow their Captaine, consented to take the same course.

Wee had not sailed past three leagues but we had espied a saile plying to the Westward with her two courses, to our great joy, who vowed together that wee would (p. 43) have her or else it should cost us deare. Bearing with her, we found her to be a Spanish ship of above ninetie Tun, which being wheaved a maine by us, despised our summons and shot off her Ordnance at us.

The Sea went verie high, so that it was not for us to attempt to boord her, and therefore wee made fit small saile to attend upon her and keepe her company (to her small content), till fairer weather might lay the Sea. We spent not past two houres in our attendance, till it pleased God after a great shower to send us a reasonable calme, so that we might use our Peeces, and approach her at pleasure, in such sort that in short time wee had taken her, finding her laden with victuall well powdred and dried, which at that present wee received as sent us of Gods great mercie.

Nov. 13. After all things were set in order, and that the winde increased toward night, wee plyed off and on till day, at what time our Captaine sent in *Edward Hixom*, who had then charge of his Pinnace, to search out some Harbour along the Coast, who, having found out a little one, some ten or twelve leagues to the East of *Santa Martha*, where in sounding he had good ground and sufficient water, presently returned, and our Captaine brought in his new Prize. Then by promising libertie and all their apparrell to the Spanyards which we had taken, if they would bring us to water and fresh victuals, the rather by their meanes wee obtained of the inhabitants Indians what they had which was plentifull. These Indians were clothed and governed by a *Spaniard* which dwelt in the next Towne, not past a league off.

We stayed there all day, watering and wooding, and providing things necessarie by giving content and satisfaction to the Indians. But towards night our Captaine called all of us

aboard (only leaving the Spaniards lately taken in the Prize ashore, according to our (p. 44) promise made them, to their great content, who acknowledged that our Captaine did them a farre greater favour in setting them freely at libertie, then hee had done them displeasure in taking their ship) and so set saile.

The sicknesse which had begun to kindle amongst us two or three dayes before, did this day shew it selfe in *Charles Glub*, one of our Quarter-masters, a verie tall man, and a right good Mariner, taken away to the great grieve both of Captaine and Company. What the cause of this malady was, wee knew not of certaintie. Wee imputed it to the cold which our men had taken, lying without succour in the Pinnaces. But howsoever it was, thus it pleased God to visit us, and yet in favour to restore unto health all the rest of our Company that were touched with this disease, which were not a few.

The next morning being faire weather, though the winde Nov. 15 continued contrarie, our Captaine commanded the *Minion*, his lesser Pinnace, to hasten away before him towards his ships at *Fort Diego* within the *Cabezas*, to carrie newes of his comming, and to put all things in a readinesse for our Land journey<sup>1</sup>, if they heare any thing of the Fleets arrivall by the *Symerons*, giving the *Minion* charge, if they wanted wine, to take *Saint Bernards* in their way, and there take in some such portion, as they thought good, of the wines which wee had there hidden in the sand.

We plyed to windwards, as neere as we could, so that within Nov. 22 a seven-night after the *Minion* departed from us, we came to *Saint Bernards*, where we staid many houres, finding but twelve Botijos<sup>2</sup> of wine, of all the store wee left, which had escaped the curious search of the Enemy (who had beene there) for that they were deepe in the ground.

(p. 45) Within foure or five dayes after we came to our Ship, Nov. 27 where we found all other things in good order, but received

<sup>1</sup> It is to be deduced that in the conference held with the *cimarrones* at the end of September (p. 279, *ante*) it had been decided to make the joint attack upon the pack-trains, which was shortly made at Cruces.

<sup>2</sup> Demijohns.

very heaue newes of the death of *John Drake*, our Captaines b[r]other, and another young man called *Richard Allen*, which were both slaine at one time, as they attempted the boarding of a Frigate within two dayes after our departing from them.

The manner of it (a[s] we learned by examination of the Companie) was this: When they saw this Frigate at sea (as they were going towards their Fort with plancks to make the Platformes) the Company were very importunate on him to give chase and set upon this Frigate, which they deemed had beene a fit booty for them. But he told them that they wanted weapons to assaile, they knew not how the Frigate was provided, they had their boat loaden with plancks to finish that his brother had commanded. But when this would not satisfie them, but that still they urged him with words and supposals: If you will needes, said he, adventure, it shall never be said that I will be hindermost, neither shall you report to my Brother that you lost your voyage by any cowardise you found in me. Thereupon every man shifted as they might for the time, and, heaving their planckes over board, tooke them such poore weapons as they had, *viz.* a broken pointed Rapier, one old Visgee<sup>1</sup> and a rustie Caliver. *John Drake* tooke the Rapier, and made a Gantlet of his Pillow, *Richard Allen* the Visgee (both standing in the head of the Pinnace, called the *Lion*), *Robert* tooke the Caliver, and so boarded. But they found the Frigate armed round about with a close fight of hides, full of Pikes and Calivers, which were discharged in their faces, and deadly wounded those that were in the Fore-ship, *John Drake* in the belly and *Richard Allen* in the head. But (p. 46) notwithstanding their wounds, they with Oares shifted off the Pinnace, got cleare of the Frigate, and with all haste recovered their Ship, where (within an houre after) this young man of great hope ended his dayes, greatly lamented of all the Company.

Thus having moared our Ships fast, our Captaine resolved to keepe himselfe close, without being descried, untill hee might heare of the comming of the Spanish Fleet, and therefore set no more to Sea, but supplied his wants, both

<sup>1</sup> *Visgee*, a harpoon or fish-spear.

for his owne Company and the *Symerons*, out of his foresaid Magazine, besides daily out of the woods, with wild Hogges, Pheasants and Guanans; continuing in health (God be praised) all the meane time, which was a moneth at least, till at length about the beginning of January, halfe a score of our Company fell downe sicke altogether, and the most of them died within two or three dayes: so long that we had thirtie at a time sicke of the *Calenture*<sup>1</sup>, which attacked our men, either by reason of the suddaine change from cold to heate, or by reason of brackish water which had beene taken in by one Pinnace, through the sloth of their men, in the mouth of the River, not rowing further in where the water was good.

Jan. 3  
[1573].

Among the rest *Joseph Drake*, another of his brethren, died in our Captaines armes, of the same disease. Of which, that the cause might be the better discerned, and consequently remedied to the releefe of others, by our Captaines appointment he was ript open by the Surgeon, who found his liver swolne, his heart as it were sodden, and his guts all faire. This was the first and last experiment that our Captaine made of Anatomy in this voyage.

The Surgeon that cut him up over-lived him not past foure dayes, although hee were not toucht with that (p. 47) sickenesse, of which hee had beene recovered above a moneth before: but onely of an overbold practise which he would needs make upon himselfe, by receiving an over-strong purgation of his owne device; after which taken he never spake, nor his boy recovered the health which he lost by tasting it, till he saw England.

The *Symerons*, who, as is beforesaid, had been entertained by our Captaine in September last, and usually repaired to our Ship, during all the time of our absence ranged the Country up and downe, betweene *Nombre de Dios* and us, to learne what they might for us, whereof they gave our Captaine advertisement from time to time, as now particularly certaine of them let him understand that the Fleete was certainly arrived at *Nombre de Dios*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly yellow fever.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. xl; and Document No. 19, *ante*.

Jan. 30<sup>t</sup>. Therefore he sent the *Lyon* to the seamost Iland of the *Cativaas*, to discry the truth of the report: by reason it must needs be that if the Fleet were in *Nombre de Dios* all the Frigates of the Countrey would repaire thitherwards with victuall.

The *Lyon* within few dayes descried that she was sent for, espying a Frigate which she presently boarded and tooke<sup>2</sup>, laden with *Maiz*, Hens, and Pompions from *Tolou*, who assured us of the whole truth of the arrivall of the Fleete. In this Frigate were taken one woman and twelve men, of whom one was the *Scrivano* of *Tolou*. These wee used very courteously, keeping them diligently guarded from the deadly hatred of the *Symerons*, who sought daily by all meanes they could to get them of our Captaine, that they might cut their throates to revenge their wrongs and injuries which the Spanish Nation had done them; but our Captaine perswaded them not to touch them or give them ill countenance while they were in his charge, and (p. 48) tooke order for their safetie, not onely in his presence, but also in his absence. For when he had prepared to take his journey for *Panama* by land, he gave *Ellis Hixom* charge of his owne Ship and Company, and especially of those Spaniards whom he had put into the great Prize, which was haled a shoare to the Iland (which we termed *Slaughter Iland*, because so many of our men died there) and used as a store-house for our selves, and a prison for our Enemies.

All things thus ordered, our Captaine (conferring with his Companie and the Chiefest of the *Symerons* what provisions were to be prepared for this great and long journey, what kinde of weapons, what store of victuals, and what manner of apparell) was especially advised to carrie as great store of Shooes as possibly he might, by reason of so many Rivers with stones and gravell as they were to passe, which accordingly providing, prepared his Company for that journey,

<sup>1</sup> There would seem to be an error in date here, for on January 30 the English were inland, in ambush near Venta Cruces.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Document No. 20, which mentions two barks the English took, laden with subsistence.

entring it upon Shrove-tuesday<sup>1</sup>. At what time there had died *Feb. 3.* twentie eight of our men; and a few whole men were left aboard with *Ellis Hixom* to keepe the Ship and tend the sicke, and guard the prisoners.

At his departure our Captaine gave this Master straight charge in any case not to trust any messenger that should come in his name with any tokens, unlesse he brought his hand writing: which he knew could not be counterfeited by the *Symerons* or *Spaniards*.

We were in all fortie eight, of which eighteene<sup>2</sup> onely were English; the rest were *Symerons*, which besides their Armes bare every one of them a great quantity of victuall and provision, supplying our want of cariages in so long a march, so that we were not troubled with any thing but our furniture. And because they could not carrie enough to suffice us altogether, therefore, as they promised (p. 49) before, so by the way with their arrowes they provided for us competent store from time to time.

They have everie one of them two sorts of arrowes, the one to defend himselfe and offend the enemy, the other to kill his victuals. These for fight are somewhat like the Scottish Arrow, onely somewhat longer, and headed with iron, wood, or fish-bones. But the Arrowes for provision are of three sorts. The first serveth to kill any great Beast neere hand, as Oxe, Stag, or wilde Boare. This hath a head of iron of a pound and a halfe weight, shaped in forme like the head of a javelin or Boare-speare, as sharpe as any knife, making so large and deepe a wound as can hardly be beleaved of him that hath not seene it. The second serveth for lesser Beasts, and hath a head of three quarters of a pound. This he most usually shooteth. The third serveth for all manner of Birds: it hath a

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish documents show that the English account is mistaken in this date. Drake unquestionably set out for Cruces on receipt of news of the fleet's arrival, i.e. about the middle of January. The error may have arisen out of an unskilful combination of the two or more relations upon which this narrative is based.

<sup>2</sup> If Drake's company numbered fifty-two (see p. 245) when he attacked Nombre de Dios the preceding July, and twenty-eight or thirty had died of fever, and eighteen now went inland, Hixom can have had only four to six men left with him.

head of an ounce weight. And these heads, though they bee of iron onely, yet are they so cunningly tempered that they will continue a verie good edge a long time, and though they bee turned sometimes yet they will never or seldome breake. The necessitie, in which they stand hereof continually, causeth them to have iron in farre greater account then gold: and no man among them is of greater estimation then hee that can most perfectly give this temper unto it.

Everie day we were marching by Sun-rising; we continued till ten in the forenoone, then resting (ever neere some river) till past twelve, wee marched till foure, and then by some rivers side wee reposed our selves in such houses as either we found prepared heretofore by them, when they travelled thorow these woods, or they daily built verie readily for us, in this manner:

As soone as wee came to the place where we intended to lodge the *Symerons*, presently laying downe their (p. 50) burthens, fell to cutting of forkes or posts, and poles or rafters, and Palmito boughes, or Plantaine leaves, and with great speed set up, to the number of six houses. For everie of which, they first fastned deepe into the ground three or foure great posts with forkes; upon them they layd one Transome, which was commonly about twentie foot, and made the sides in the manner of the roofes of our Countrey houses, thatching it close with those aforesayd leaves, which keepe out water a long time, observing alwayes that in the lower ground, where greater heat was, they left some three or foure foot open unthacht below, and made the houses, or rather roofes, so many foot the higher. But in the hils, where the aire was more peircing and the nights colder, they made our roomes alwayes lower, and thatched them close to the ground, leaving onely one doore to enter at, and a lover-hole<sup>1</sup> for a vent, in the midst of the rooffe. In everie of these they made foure severall lodgings, and three fires, one in the midst, and one at each end of everie house, so that the roome was most temperately warme, and nothing annoyed with smoake, partly by reason of the nature of the wood which they use to burne,

<sup>1</sup> I.e. louvre.

yeelding verie little smoake, partly by reason of their artificial making of it, as firing the wood (cut in length like our billets) at the ends, and joyning them together so close, that though no flame or fire did appeare, yet the heat continued without intermission.

Neere many of the rivers where wee stayed or lodged we found sundry sorts of fruits, which we might use with great pleasure and safetie temperately, *Mammeas*, *Guyavas*, *Palmitos*, *Pines*, *Oranges*, *Limons*; and divers other from eating of which they dissuaded us in any case, unlesse we eat verie few of them, and those first dry rosted, as *Plantans*, *Potatos*, and such like.

(p. 51) In journeying, as oft as by chance they found any wilde Swine, of which those hills and valleyes have store, they would ordinarily, six at a time, deliver their burthens to the rest of their fellowes, and pursue, kill, and bring away after us, as much as they could carrie, and time permitted. One day as wee travelled the *Symerons* found an Otter, and prepared it to bee drest. Our Captaine marvelling at it, *Pedro*<sup>1</sup> (our cheefe *Symeron*) asked him, *Are you a man of warre, and in want, and yet doubt whether this bee meat that hath blood?* Herewithall our Captaine rebuked himselfe secretly, that he had so slightly considered of it before.

The third day of our journey, they brought us to a Towne<sup>2</sup> of their owne, seated neere a faire river, on the side of a hill, environed with a dike of eight foot broad and a thicke mud wall of ten foot high, sufficient to stop a sudden surprizer. It had one long and broad street lying East and West, and two other crosse streets of lesse bredth and length. There were in it some five or six and fiftie households, which were kept so cleane and sweet that not only the houses but the verie streets were verie pleasant to behold. In this Towne we saw they

<sup>1</sup> p. xl, note 3, *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> Obviously, it is not possible to trace Drake's route exactly. After he had crossed the first range (probably by Diablo pass) he must have turned to the north-west, since Venta Cruces was his destination. The town here described must have been in the upper valley of the Chucunaque River and that it was not Ronconcholon is evident if only from the subsequent mention of another, distant, city where the *cimarron* king dwelt (for this was Ronconcholon, to the south-west).



lived verie civilly and cleanelly, for as soone as wee came thither, they washed themselves in the river, and changed their apparel, which was verie fine and fitly made (as also their women doe weare) somewhat after the Spanish fashion, though nothing so costly. This Towne is distant thirtie five leagues from *Nombre de Dios*, and fortie five from *Panama*. It is plentifully stored with many sorts of Beasts and Fowle, with plentie of Maiz and sundry fruits.

Touching their affection in religion, they have no kinde of Priests, onely they held the Crosse in great reputation; but at our Captaines perswasion they were contented to leave their Crosses, and to learne the Lords (p. 52) prayer, and to be instructed in some measure concerning Gods true worship<sup>1</sup>. They keepe a continuall watch in foure parts, three miles off their Towne, to prevent the mischiefes which the *Spaniards* intend against them, by the conducting of some of their owne coats which, having beene taken by the *Spaniards*, have beene enforced thereunto; wherein, as we learned, sometimes the *Spaniards* have prevailed over them, specially when they lived lesse carefull; but since [then?] they against the *Spaniards*, whom they kil like beasts, as often as they take them in the woods, having aforehand understood of their comming.

Feb. 7. We stayed with them that night and the next day till noone, during which time they related unto us divers verie strange accidents that had fallen out between them and the *Spaniards*, namely one: A gallant Gentleman<sup>2</sup> entertained by the Governours of the Countrey undertooke the yeere last past with a hundred and fiftie Souldiers to put this Towne to the sword, men, women, and children, being conducted to it by one of them that had beene taken prisoner and won by great gifts. Hee surprised it halfe an houre before day, by which occasion most of the men escaped but many of their women and children were slaughtered, or taken. But the same morning by Sunrising, after that their Guide was slaine in following another mans wife and that the *Symerons* had assembled themselves in their strength, they behaved them-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 120, *ante*, for the *cimarrones*' announcement of their conversion.

<sup>2</sup> p. xli, *ante*.

selves in such sort and drave the Spaniards to such extremitie that, what with the disadvantage of the woods, having lost their Guide, and thereby their way, what with famine and want, there escaped not past thirtie of them, to returne answer to those which sent them.

Their King dwelt in a Citie within sixteene leagues Southeast of *Panama*, which is able to make one thousand seven hundred fighting men.

(p. 53) They all intreated our Captaine very earnestly to make his abode with them some two or three dayes, promising that by that time they would double his strength if he thought good. But he, thanking them for their offer, told them that he could stay no longer, it was more then time to prosecute his purposed voyage; as for strength, he would with no more then he had, although he might have presently twentie times as much, which they tooke as proceeding not onely from kindnesse, but also from magnanimitie, and therefore they marched foorth that afternoone with great good will.

This was the order of our march: Foure of those *Symerons* that best knew the wayes went about a mile distance before us, breaking boughes as they went, to be a direction to those that followed, but with great silence, which they required us also to keepe. Then twelve of them were as it were our Vantgard and other twelve our Reereward, wee with their two Captaines in the midst.

All the way was thorow woods very coole and pleasant, by reason of those goodly and high Trees that grow there so thicke that it is cooler travelling there under them in that hot region, then it is in the most parts of England in the Summer time. This gave a speciall encouragement unto us all, that we understood there was a great Tree about the midway, from which we might at once discerne the North sea from whence we came, and the South sea whether we were going.

The fourth day following we came to the height of the desired Hill (a very high Hill, lying East and West, like a ridge betweene the two Seas) about tenne of the clocke; where the chiefest of these *Symerons* tooke our Captaine by the hand Feb. 11

and prayed him to follow him, (p. 54) if he was desirous to see at once the two Seas, which he had so long longed for.

Here was that goodly and great high Tree, in which they had cut and made divers steps to ascend up neere unto the top, where they had made a convenient Bower wherein tenne or twelve men might easily sit: and from thence we might without any difficulty plainly see *th' Atlantick Ocean* whence now we came and the south *Atlanticke* so much desired. South and North of this Tree they had felled certaine Trees that the prospect might bee the cleerer, and neere about the Tree there were divers strong houses that had beene built long before, as well by other *Symerons* as by these, which usually passe that way, as being inhabited in divers places in those waste Countries.

After our Captaine had ascended to this Bower with the chiefe *Symeron* and (having as it pleased God at that time, by reason of the brize, a very faire day) had seene that sea of which he had heard such golden reports, hee besought Almighty God of his goodnesse to give him life and leave to sayle once in an English Ship in that sea. And then, calling up all the rest of our men, acquainted *John Oxnam* especially with this his petition and purpose, if it would please God to grant him that happinesse; who, understanding it, presently protested that unlesse our Captaine did beate him from his company he would follow him by Gods grace.

Thus all, thoroughly satisfied with the sight of the seas, descended and, after our repast, continued our ordinary  
 Feb. 13. march through woods yet two dayes more as before without any great varietie. But then we came to march in a Champion Country, where the grasse groweth not only in great length as the knotgrasse groweth in many places, (p. 55) but to such height that the inhabitants are faine to burne it thrise in the yeere that it may bee able to feede their Cattle, of which they have thousands. For it is a kinde of grasse with a stalke as big as a great wheaten reed, which hath a blade issuing from the top of it, on which though the cattle feed yet it groweth every day higher, untill the top be too high for an Oxe to reach. Then the inhabitants are wont to put fire to it, for

the space of five or six miles together, which notwithstanding, after it is thus burnt within three dayes springeth up fresh like greene corne. Such is the great fruitfulnessse of the soyle by reason of the evennesse of the day and night, and the rich dewes which fall every morning.

In these three last dayes march in the Champion, as we past over the hilles we might see *Panama* five or sixe times a day, and the last day we saw the Ships riding in the roade. Feb. 14.

But after that we were come within a dayes journey of *Panama*, our Captaine (understanding by the *Symerons* that the Dames of *Panama* are wont to send forth Hunters and Fowlers for taking of sundry daintie Fowle, which the Land yeeldeth, by whom, if we marched not very heedelessly, wee might be descried) caused all his company to march out of all ordinary way, and that with as great heed, silence and secrecie, as possibly they might, to the Grove, which was agreed on foure dayes before, lying within a league of *Panama*, where wee might lie safely undiscovered neare the high way that leadeth from thence to *Nombre de Dios*.

Thence wee sent a chosen *Symeron*, one that had served a Master in *Panamah* before time, in such apparell as the *Negroes* of *Panamah* doe use to warre, to be our Espiall, to go into the Towne to learne the certaine night and time of the night when the Carriers (p. 56) laded the Treasure from the Kings Treasure-house to *Nombre de Dios*.

For they are wont to take their journey from *Panama* to *Venta Cruz*, which is sixe leagues, ever by night, because the Countrey is all champion and consequently by day very hot; but from *Venta Cruz* to *Nombre de Dios*, as oft as they travell by land with their Treasure, they travell alwayes by day and not by night, because all that way is full of woods, and therefore very fresh and coole—unlesse the *Symerons* happily encounter them, and make them sweate with feare, as sometimes they have done, whereupon they are glad to guard their *Recoes*<sup>1</sup> with Souldiers as they passe that way.

<sup>1</sup> *Recuas*, pack-trains. Documents Nos. 4 and 9 show that the *cimarrones* had attacked these *en route* between *Panama* and *Nombre de Dios*, as now they bragged to Drake that they had done.

This last day our Captaine did behold and view the most of all that faire Citie, discerning the large streete which lieth directly from the sea into the land, South and North. By three of the clocke we came into this Grove, passing (for the more secrecie) alongst a certaine River which at that time was almost dried up.

Having disposed of our selves in the Grove, wee dispatched our Spie an houre before night so that by the closing in of the evening he might be in the Citie, as hee was; whence presently he returned unto us, that which very happily he understood by companions of his: That the Treasurer of *Lima*, intending to passe into *Spaine* in the first *adviso*<sup>1</sup>, (which was a Ship of three hundred and fifty Tunne, a very good Sayler) was ready that night to take his journey towards *Nombre de Dios*, with his Daughter and Family: having foureteene Moyles in company, of which eight was laden with gold and one with jewels. And farther, that there were two other *Recos*, of fiftie Moyles in each, laden with victuals for the most part, with some little quantitie of silver, to come forth that night after the (p. 57) other. There are twentie eight of these *Recos*, the greatest of them is of seaventie Moyles, the lesse of fiftie, unlesse some particular man hire for himselfe, ten, twenty or thirty, as he hath need.

Upon this notice we forthwith marcht foure leagues, till we came within two leagues of *Venta Cruz*, in which march two of our *Symerons*, which were sent before, by scent of his match found and brought a Spaniard whom they had found a sleepe by the way, by scent of the said match, and drawing neere thereby, heard him taking his breath as he slept; and being but one, they fell upon him, stopt his mouth from crying, put out his match, and bound him so that they well neare strangled him by that time he was brought unto us. By examining him, we found all that to be true which our Spie had reported to us, and that he was a Souldier entertained with others by the Treasurer for the guard and conduct of this Treasure, from *Venta Cruz* to *Nombre de Dios*.

<sup>1</sup> Advice boat.

This Souldier, having learned who our Captaine was, tooke courage and was bold to make two requests unto him: the one, that he would command his *Symerons* which hated the Spaniards (especially the Souldiers) extreemely, to spare his life, which he doubted not but they would do at his charge; the other was that, seeing he was a Souldier, and assured him that they should have that night more gold, besides jewels, and pearles of great price, then all they could carrie (if not, then he was to be dealt with how they would), but if they all found it so, then it might please our Captaine to give unto him as much as it might suffice for him and his Mistresse to live upon, as he had heard our Captaine had done to divers others, for which he would make his name so famous as any of them which had received like favour.

(p. 58) Being at the place appointed, our Captaine with halfe of his men lay on one side of the way, about fiftie paces off in the long grasse. *John Oxnam*, with the Captaine of the *Symerons* and the other halfe, lay on the other side of the way at the like distance but so farre behind that as occasion served the former Company might take the formost Moyles by the heads and the other the hindmost, because the Moyles, tyed together, are alwayes driven one after another; and especially that if we should have need to use our weapons that night, we might be sure not to endamage our fellowes. We had not laine thus in ambush much above an houre, but we heard the *Recos* comming from the Citie to *Venta Cruz*, and from *Venta Cruz* to the Citie, which hath a very common and great trade, when the Fleetes are there: we heard them, by reason they delight much to have deepe sounding Belles, which in a still night are heard very farre off.

Now though there were as great charge given as might be that none of our men should show or stirre themselves, but let all that came from *Venta Cruz* to passe quietly, yea their *Recos* also, because we knew that they brought nothing but Marchandise from thence, yet one of our men called *Robert Pike*, having drunken too much *Aqua vitæ* without water, forgat himselfe, and entising a *Symeron* forth with him, was gone hard to the way, with intent to have shewne his forward-

nesse on the foremost Moyles. And when a Cavalier from *Venta Cruz*, well mounted with his Page running at his stirrop, past by, unadvisedly he rose up to see what he was; but the *Symeron* (of better discretion) puld him downe, and lay upon him, that he might not discover them any more. Yet by this the Gentleman had taken notice by (p. 59) seeing one all in white (for that we had all put our shirts over our other apparell, that we might be sure to know our owne men in the pell mell in the night). By meanes of this sight, the Cavalier (putting spurs to his horse), rode a fast gallop, as desirous not onely himselfe to be free of this doubt, which he imagined, but also to give advertisement to others that they might avoid it.

Our Captaine, who had heard and observed (by reason of the hardnesse of the ground and stilnesse of the night) the change of this Gentlemans trot to a gallop, suspected that he was discovered, but could not imagine by whose fault, neither did the time give him leasure to search. And therefore considering that it might bee by reason of the danger of the place (well knowne to ordinary Travellers), we lay still in expectation of the Treasurers comming, who was by this time within halfe a league, and had come forwards to us, but that this Horseman meeting him, and (as wee afterwards learned by the other *Recoes*) making report to him what he had seene presently that night, what he heard of Captaine *Drake* this long time, and what he conjectured to be most likely: *viz.* that the said Captaine *Drake*, or some for him, disappointed of his expectation of getting any great Treasure, both at *Nombre de Dios* and other places, was by some meanes or other come by land, in covert thorow the woods, unto this place to speed for his purpose, and thereupon perswaded him to turne his *Reco* out of the way, and let the other *Recoes*, which were comming after, to passe on. They were whole *Recoes*, and loaden but with victuals for the most part, so that the losse of them were farre lesse, if the worst befell, and yet they should serve to discover them as well as the best.

(p. 60) Thus by the recklesnesse of on[e] of our Company, and by the carefulnesse of this Traveller, wee were disappointed

of a most rich bootie, which is to be thought God<sup>1</sup> would not should be taken, for that by all likelihood it was well gotten by that Treasurer.

The other two *Recoes* were no sooner come up to us but being stayed and seased on, one of the cheefe Carriers, a very sensible fellow, told our Captaine by what meanes wee were discovered, and counselled us to shift for our selves betimes, unlesse we were able to encounter the whole force of the Citie and Countrie which before day would be about us.

It pleased us but little that we were defeated of our golden *Recoe*, and that in these we could find not past some two Horse-loade of silver; but it grieved our Captaine much more that he was discovered, and that by one of his owne men. But knowing it bootlesse to grieve at things past, and having learned by experience that all safetie in extremities consisteth in taking of time, after no long consultation with *Pedro* the chiefe of our *Symerons*, who declared that there were but two wayes for him—the one to travell backe againe the same secret way they came, for foure leagues space into the Woods, or else to march forward, by the high way to *Venta Cruz*, being two leagues, and make a way with his Sword thorow the Enemies—he resolved, considering the long and wearie marches that wee had taken, and chiefly that last evening and day before, to take now the shortest and readiest way, as choosing rather to encounter his Enemies while he had strength remaining, then to be encountred or chased when wee should bee worne out with wearinesse (principally now having the Moyles, to ease them that would, some part of the way).

(p. 61) Therefore, commanding all to refresh themselves moderately with such store of victuall as wee had there in abundance, he signified his resolution and reason to them all, asking *Pedro* by name whether he would give his hand not to forsake him (because hee knew that the rest of the *Symerons* would also then stand fast and firme, so faithfull are they to their Captaine.) He, being very glad of his resolution, gave our

<sup>1</sup> The Spaniards concurred in this proud view; cf. Documents Nos. 19, 21, etc.



Captaine his hand and vowed that hee would rather die at his foote then leave him to the Enemies, if he held this course.

So, having strengthned our selves for the time, we tooke our journey towards *Venta Cruz*, with helpe of the Moyles, till we came within a mile of the Towne, where we turned away the *Recoes*, charging the Conducters of them not to follow us upon paine of their lives.

There the way is cut thorow the Woods, about ten or twelve foote broad, so as two *Recoes* may passe one by another. The fruitfulnessse of the soyle causeth that with often shredding and ridding the way those Woods grow as thicke as our thickest hedges in *England* that are ofttest cut.

To the midst of this Wood a Company of Souldiers<sup>1</sup>, which continually lay in that Towne to defend it against the *Symerons*, were come forth, to stop us if they might on the way, if not, to retrait to their strength, and there to expect us. A Convent of Friars, of whom one was become a Leader, joynd with these Souldiers, to take such part as they did.

Our Captaine, understanding by our two *Symerons*, which with great heedfulnessse and silence marched now but above halfe a flight-shot before us, that it was (p. 62) time for us to arme and take us to our weapons, for they knew the enemy was at hand by smelling of their match and hearing of a noyse, had given us charge that no one of us should make any shot untill the Spaniards had first spent their volly, which he thought they would not doe before they had spoken, as indeed fell out. For as soone as we were within hearing, a Spanish Captaine cried aloud, *Hóó!* Our Captaine answered him likewise, and being demanded, *Que gente?* replied: *Englishmen*. But when the said Commander charged him in the name of the King of *Spaine*, his Master, that we should yeeld our selves, promising in the word and faith of a Gentleman Souldier, that if he would so do he would use us with all courtesie; our Captaine, drawing somewhat neere him said, that for the honour of the Queene of *England*, his Mistresse,

<sup>1</sup> According to the Spanish documents (Nos. 19, 20, 21, etc.) the English encountered a party of travellers, Dominican friars among them, *en route* from Cruces to Panama. Doubtless they had a military escort. Evidently the friars put up a good fight.

he must have passage that way, and therewithall discharged his Pistoll towards him.

Upon this they presently shot off their whole volly, which, though it lightly wounded our Captaine and divers of our men, yet it caused death to one only of our Company, called *John Harris*, who was so poudered with haile-shot (which they all used for the most part as it seemed, or else quartered, for that our men were hurt with that kinde) that wee could not recover his life, though he continued all that day afterwards with us. Presently as our Captaine perceived their shot to come slacking, as the latter drops of a great shewre of raine, with his Whistle he gave us his usuall signall to answer them with our shot and arrowes, and so march onwards upon the *Enemie* with intent to come to handi-strokes, and to have joyned with them, whom, when he found retired as to a place of some better strength, he encreased his pace to prevent them if he might. Which the (p. 63) *Symerons* perceiving, although by terror of the shot continuing they were for the time stept a side, yet as soone as they discerned by hearing that we marched onward, they all rusht forwards one after another, traversing the way, with their Arrowes ready in their Bowes, and their manner of Country dance or leape, very lustily singing *Yó pehó, Yó pehó*, and so got before us, where they continued their leape and song, after the manner of their owne Country warres, till they and we over-tooke some of the *Enemie* who, neere the Townes end, had conveyed themselves within the Woods, to have taken their stand at us, as before.

But our *Symerons* (now throughly encouraged), when they saw our resolution, brake in thorow the thickst, on both sides of them, forcing them to flye, Fryers and all, although divers of our men were wounded, and one *Symeron* especially was runne thorow with one of their Pikes, whose courage and mind served him so well notwithstanding that he revenged his owne death ere hee died, by killing him that had given him that deadly wound.

We, with all speed following this chase, entred the Towne of *Venta Cruz*, being of about fortie or fiftie houses, which

had both a Governour<sup>1</sup> and other Officers and some faire houses, with many Store-houses large and strong for the Warres which were brought thither from *Nombre de Dios*, by the River of *Chagro*, so to be transported by Moyles to *Panama*, besides the Monasterie where we found above a thousand Bulles and Pardons newly sent thither from Rome.

In those houses wee found three Gentlewomen which had lately beene delivered of Children there though their dwelling were in *Nombre de Dios*, because (p. 64) it hath beene observed of long time, as they reported to us, that no *Spaniards* or White woman could ever be delivered in *Nombre de Dios* with safetie of their children, but that within two or three dayes they died; notwithstanding that, being borne and brought up in this *Venta Cruz* or *Panama* five or sixe yeares and then brought to *Nombre de Dios*, if they escaped sicknesse<sup>2</sup> the first or second moneth, they commonly lived in it as healthily as in any other place, although no stranger (as they say) can endure there any long time, without great danger of death or extreame sicknesse.

Though at our first comming into the Towne with Armes so suddenly these Gentlewomen were in great feare, yet because our Captaine had given strait charge to all the *Symerons* (that while they were in his companie they should never hurt any woman, nor man that had not weapon in his hand to doe them hurt, which they earnestly promised and no lesse faithfully performed) they had no wrong offered them not any thing taken from them to the worth of a garter: wherein, albeit they had indeed sufficient safetie and securitie by those of his company which our Captaine sent unto them of purpose to comfort them, yet they never ceased most earnestly intreating that our Captaine would vouchsafe to come to them himselfe for their more safetie, which when he did, in their presence reporting the charge he had first given and the assurance of his men, they were comforted.

While the Guards which we had (not without great neede)

<sup>1</sup> p. xxviii, ante, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Natives of places formerly decimated by yellow fever believed, not that they were naturally immune to it, but that they had the fever lightly as children and so acquired immunity.

set, as well on the bridge which we were to passe over as at the Townes end where wee entred (they have no other entrance into the Towne by Land, but from the waters side there is one other, to carrie up and (p. 65) downe their Merchandise from their Frigates), gained us libertie and quiet to stay in this Towne some houre and halfe, we had not onely refreshed our selves, but our company and *Symerons* had gotten some good pillage<sup>1</sup>, which our Captaine allowed and gave them (being not the thing he looked for) so that it were not too cumbersome or heauey in respect of our travell, or defence of our selves. A little before we departed, some ten or twelve horsemen from *Panama*, by all likelihood supposing that we were gone out of this Towne, for that all was so still and quiet, came to enter the Towne confidently, but, finding their entertainment such as it was, they that could rode faster backe againe for feare, then they had ridden forwards for hope.

Thus we having ended our businesse in this Towne and the day beginning to spring, we marched over the Bridge, observing the same order that wee did before. There we were all safe in our opinion, as if we had beene environed with Wall and Trench, for that no *Spaniard* without his extreame danger could follow us. The rather now, for that our *Symerons* were growne very valiant. But our Captaine considering that he had a long way to passe & that he had bin now well neere [a] fortnight from his Ship, where he had left his Company but weake by reason of their sicknesse, hastned his journeies as much as he might, refusing to visit the other *Symeron* Townes (which they earnestly desired him) and encouraging his owne Companie with such example and speech, that the way seemed much shorter. For he marched most cheerefully and assured us that he doubted not but ere he left that Coast we should all be bountifully paid and recompensed for all those paines taken. But by reason of this, our Captaines haste, and leaving (p. 66) of their Townes, wee marched many dayes with hungry stomackes, much against the will of our *Symerons*, who, if we would have stayed any day from this continuall journeying, would have killed for us victuall sufficient.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Documents Nos. 21, 22, etc.

In our absence the rest of the *Symerons* had built a little Towne within three leagues off the port where our Ship lay. There our Captaine was contented, upon their great and earnest intreaties, to make some stay, for that they alleadged it was onely built for his sake. And indeed hee consented the rather that the want of shooes might be supplied by meanes of the *Symerons* (who were a great helpe unto us), all our men complayning of the tendernes of their feete, whom our Captaine would himselfe in their complaint accompany sometimes without cause, but sometimes with cause indeed, which made the rest to beare the burthen the more easily.

These *Symerons* during all the time that wee were with them did us continually very good service, and in particular in this journey, being unto us instead of intelligencers to advertise us; of guides in our way to direct us; of purveyors to provide victualls for us; of housewrights to build our lodgings; and had indeed able and strong bodies carying all our necessities, yea many times when some of our company fainted with sicknesse or wearinesse, two *Symerons* would carrie him with ease betweene them two miles together, and at other times (when need was) they would shew themselves no lesse valiant then industrious and of good judgement.

Feb. 22. From this Towne, at our first entrance in the even on Saturday, our Captaine dispatched a *Symeron* with a token and certaine order to the Master, who had (p. 67) this three weekes kept good watch against the enemye, and shifted in the woods for fresh victuall for the releefe and recovery of our men left aboard. Assoone as this messenger was come to the shoare, calling to our Ship, as bringing some newes, he was quickly set aboard by those which longed to here of our Captaines speeding; but when he shewed the tooth-pike of gold, which hee said our Captaine had sent for a token to *Edward Hixom*, with charge to meete him at such a River, though the Master knew well the Captaines Tooth-pike yet by reason of his admonition and caveat given him at parting, he (though he bewrayed no signe of distrusting the *Symeron*) yet stood as amazed, least something had befallen our Captaine otherwise then well. The *Symeron* perceiving this,

told him that it was night when he was sent away, so that our Captaine could not send any letter, but yet with the point of his knife hee wrote something upon the Toothpike which (hee said) should bee sufficient to gaine credit to the messenger.

Thereupon the Master lookt upon it and saw written: *By me Francis Drake*, wherefore hee beleevved, and according to the message prepared what provision he could and repaired to the mouth of the River of *Tortugos*, as the *Symerons* that went with him then named it.

That after noone towards three a clocke wee were come downe to that River not past halfe an houre before we saw our Pinnace ready come to receive us, which was unto us all a double rejoycing: first, that wee saw them and, next, so soone. Our Captaine with all our Company praised God most hartily for that we saw our Pinnace and fellowes againe.

(p. 68) Wee all seemed to these who had lived at rest and plenty all this while aboard as men strangely changed (our Captaine yet not much changed) in countenance and plight, and indeed our long fasting and sore travell might somewhat fore-pine and waste us, but the greefe we drew inwardly, for that we returned without that Gold and Treasure we hoped for, did no doubt shew her print and footsteps in our faces.

The rest of our men which were then missed could not travell so well as our Captaine, and therefore were left at the Indian new Towne; and the next day we towed to another River in the bottome of the Bay and tooke them all aboard. Feb. 23.

Thus being returned from *Panama*, to the great rejoycing of our Company, who were thoroughly revived with the report we brought from thence, especially understanding our Captaines purpose, that he meant not to leave off thus, but would once againe attempt the same journey, whereof they also might be partakers, our Captaine would not in the meane time suffer this edge and forwardnesse of his men to be dulled or rebated by lying still idly unimployed, as knowing right well by continuall experiences, that no sicknesse was more noysome to impeach any enterprise then delay and idlenesse.

Therefore considering deeply the intelligences of other

places of importance thereabouts, which hee had gotten the former yeares, and particularly of *Veragua*, a rich Towne lying to the Westward, betweene *Nombre de Dios* and *Nicaragua*, where is the richest Mine of fine Gold that is on this North side, he consulted with his company touching their opinions, what was to be done in this meane time, and how they stood (p. 69) affected? Some thought, that it was most necessarie to seeke supply of victuals, that we might the better be able to keepe our men close and in health till our time came, and this was easie to be compassed, because the Frigates with victuall went without great defence, whereas the Frigates and Barkes with Treasure for the most part were wafted with great Ships and store of Souldiers. Others yet judged wee might better bestow our time in intercepting the Frigates of Treasure, first, for that our Magasins and Store-houses of victuall were resonably furnished, and the Country it selfe was so plentifull that every man might provide for himselfe if the worst befell, and victuall might hereafter be provided abundantly as well as now, whereas the Treasure never floteth upon the Sea so ordinarily as at this time of the Fleetes being there, which time in no wise may be neglected.

The *Symerons*, being demanded also their opinion, for that they were experienced in the particularities of all the Townes thereabouts, as in which some or other of them had served, declared that by *Veragua Sinnior Pezoro*<sup>1</sup>, sometimes their Master, from whom they fled, dwelt not in the Towne, for feare of some surprise, but yet not farre off from the Towne, for his better releefe, in a verie strong house of stone, where he had dwelt nineteene yeares at least, never travelling from home, unlesse happily once a yeare to *Carthagene* or *Nombre de Dios* when the Fleets were there. Hee keepeth a hundred slaves at least in the Mines, each slave being bound to bring in dayly cleare gaine (all charges deducted) three Pezoes of Gold for himselfe and two for his women (eight shillings three pence the Pezo) amounting, in the whole, to above two hun-

<sup>1</sup> Pizarro? The gold mines at Veragua were producing well at this period and the labour (negro slaves) was worked on the system here outlined.

(p. 70)dred pound sterling each day, so that hee hath heaped a mightie Masse of Treasure together, which hee keepeth in certaine great Chests of two foote deepe, three broad, and foure long, being, notwithstanding all his wealth, hard and cruell not onely to his slaves but unto all men, and therefore never going abroade but with a Guard of five or sixe men to defend his person from danger, which he feareth extraordinarily from all creatures. And, as touching meanes of compassing this purpose, they would conduct him safely thorow the woods, by the same wayes by which they fled, that he should not need to enter their Havens with danger but might come upon their backs altogether unlooked for. And though his house were of stone so that it could not be burnt, yet if our Captaine would undertake the attempt they would undermine and overthrow, or otherwise breake it open, in such sort as we might have easie accesse to his greatest Treasure.

Our Captaine, having heard all their opinions, concluded so that by deviding his Company the two first different sentences were both reconciled, both to be practised and put in use: *John Oxnam* appointed in the *Beare* to be sent Eastwards towards *Tolow*, to see what store of victuals would come athwart his halfe, and himselfe would to the Westward, in the *Minion*, lie off and on the *Cabezas*, where was the greatest trade and most ordinarie passage of those which transported Treasure from *Veragua* and *Nicaragua* to the Fleet, so that no time might bee lost nor opportunitie let slip either for victuall or Treasure. As for the attempt of *Veragua* or *Sinior Pezoros* house by land, by marching thorow the woods, he liked not of, least it might (p. 71) over wearie his men by continuall labour, whom he studied to refresh and strengthen for his next service forenamed.

Therefore using our *Symerons* most courteously, dismissing those that were desirous to go to their wives, with such gifts and favors as were most pleasing, and entertaining those still aboard his Ships which were contented to abide with the Companie remaining, the Pinnaces departed as was determined, the *Minion* to the West, the *Beare* to the East.



The *Minion* about the *Cabezas* met with a Frigate of *Nicaragua*, in which was some gold and a *Genoway* Pilot, of which Nation there are many in those Coasts, which had beene at *Veragua* not past eight dayes before. He being vere well entreated, certified our Captaine of the State of the Towne, and of the Harbor, and of a Frigate that was there ready to come forth within few dayes, aboard in which there was above a million of gold, offering to conduct him to it, if wee would do him his right, for that he knew the channell very perfectly, so that he could enter by night safely without danger of the sands and shallowes (though there bee but little water) and utterly undescried, for that the Towne is five leagues within the Harbor, and the way by land is so farre about and difficult thorow the woods that though wee should by any casualltie bee discovered, about the point of the Harbor, yet wee might dispatch our businesse and depart before the Towne could have notice of our comming. At his being there hee perceived they had heard of *Drakes* being on the Coast, which had put them in great feare, as in all other places (*Pezoro* purposing to remove himselfe to the South Sea), but there was nothing done (p. 72) to prevent him, their feare being so great that, as it is accustomed in such cases, it excluded Counsell and bred despaire.

Our Captaine, conferring with his owne knowledge and former intelligences, was purposed to have returned to his Ship to have taken some of those *Symerons* which had dwelt with *Sinior Pezoro*, to be the more confirmed in this point. But when the *Genoway* Pilot was very earnest, to have the time gained, and warranted our Captaine of good speed, if wee delaid not, hee dismissed the Frigate somewhat lighter, to hasten her journey, and with this Pilots advise laboured with sayle and oares to get this Harbor and to enter it by night accordingly, considering that this Frigate might now be gained and *Pezoros* house attempted hereafter notwithstanding.

But when we were come to the mouth of the Harbor we heard the report of two Chambers, and farther off, about a league within the Bay, two other as it were answering them.

Whereby our *Genowaise* Pilot conjectured that wee were discovered, for he assured us that this order had beene taken since his last being there; by reason of the advertisement & charge which the Governor of *Panama* had sent unto all the Coast, which even in their beds lay in great and continuall feare of our Captaine, and therefore by all likelihood maintained this kinde of watch at the charge of the rich Gnuffe *Pezoro*, for their securitie<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, being defeated of this expectation, we found that it was not Gods will that wee should enter at that time, the rather for that the winde, which had all this time beene Easterly, came up to the Westward and invited us to returne againe to our Ship, where on Sheere (p. 73) Thursday we met according to appointment with our *Beare*, and found that shee had bestowed her time to more profit then we had done.

For shee had taken a Fregat in which there were ten men, whome they set a shoare, great store of *Maiz*, 28. fat Hogs, and 200. Hens. Our Captaine discharged this Fregate of her lading and because she was new, strong, and of a good mould the next day hee tallowed her to make her a man of warre, disposing all our Ordnance and provisions that were fit for such use in her. For we had heard by the Spaniards last taken, that there were two little Gallies<sup>2</sup> built in *Nombre de Dios* to waft the *Chagro* Fleete to & fro, but were not yet both lanchd; wherefore he purposed now to adventure for that Fleete. And to hearten his company he feasted them that Mar. 20. Easter-day with great cheere and cheerefulnesse, setting up his rest upon that attempt.

The next day with the new tallowed Fregate of *Tolou* and Mar. 21. his *Beare* we set saile towards the *Cativaas*, where about two dayes after we landed and stayed while noone: at what time, seeing a sayle to the Westwards, as we deemed making to the Iland, we set sayle and plyed towards him, who, descrying us, bare with us, till he perceived by our confidence that we

<sup>1</sup> Documents at Seville describe the precautions its governor took for the defence of the town—a lookout near the harbour bar, and sentries up the river to warn of any approaching sail by firing their harquebuses as a signal.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 19.

were no Spaniards and conjectured that we were those Englishmen of whom they had heard long before. And being in great want, and desiring to be relieved by us, he bare up under our Lee, and in token of amitie shot off his Lee Ordnance which was not unanswered.

We understood that he was *Tetu*, a french Captaine of *New-haven*<sup>1</sup>, a Man of war, as we were, desirous to be releevd by us. For at our first meeting the French Captaine cast abroad his hands, and prayed our Captaine to helpe him to some water, for that he had nothing but Wine and Cider aboard him, which had brought his men into great sicknesse. He had sought us ever since hee first heard of our being upon the Coast, about this five weekes. Our Captain sent one aboard him with some releefe for the present, willing him to follow us to the next Port, where he should have both water and victualls. At our comming to anchor he sent our Captain a case of pistols and a faire guilt Symeter (which had beene the late Kings of *France*, whom Monsieur *Mongomery* hurt in the eye, and was given him by Monsieur *Strosse*<sup>2</sup>). Our Captain requited him with a chaine of Gold and a Tablet which he wore.

This Captain reported unto us the first newes of the Massacre at *Paris* at the King of *Navarres* Mariage on S. *Bartholomewes* day last, of the Admiral of *France* slaine in his Chamber, & divers other murthers: so that he thought those Frenchmen the happiest that were farthest from *France*, now no longer *France* but Frensie, even as if all *Gaul* were turned into Worme-wood and Gall, *Italian* practises having overmastered the French simplicitie. He shewed what famous and often reports he had heard of our great riches. He desired to know of our Captain which way hee might compasse his voyage also. Though we had him in some jealousie and distrust, for all his pretence, because we considered more the strength he had then the good will he might beare us, yet upon consultation among our selves, whether it were fit to receive him or no, we resolved to take him and 20 of his (p. 74) men to serve with our Captaine for halfes, in such sort

<sup>1</sup> Havre.

<sup>2</sup> p. xxxii, *ante*.

as we needed not doubt of their forces, being but twentie, nor be hurt by their portions, being no greater then ours, and yet gratifie them in their earnest suite and serve our owne purpose, which without more helpe we could very hardly have atcheived. Indeed, he had seaventie men and we now but thirty one. His Ship was above eighty Tun, and our Fregat not past twentie, our Pinnace nothing neere ten Tun; yet our Captaine thought this proportionable, in consideration that not number of men, but qualitie of their judgments and knowledge were to be the principall actors herein and the French Ship could doe no service, nor stand in any steed to this enterprize which we intended, and had agreed upon long before, both touching the time when it should take beginning, and the place where we should meet, namely at *Rio Francisco*.

Having thus agreed with Captaine *Tetu*, we sent for the *Symerons* as before was decreed. Two of them were brought aboard our Ships, to give the French assurance of this agreement. And as soone as we could furnish our selves and refresh the French company, which was within five or six dayes (by bringing them to the Magazine which was the neerest, where they were supplied by us in such sort as they protested they were beholding to us for all their lives), taking 20. of the French and fiteene of ours with our *Symerons*, leaving both our Ships in safe Roade, we mand our Fregat and two Pinnaces (we had formerly sunke our *Lyon*, shortly after our returne from *Panama*, because we had not men sufficient to man her) and went towards *Rio Francisco*, which, because it had not water enough for our Fregat, caused us to leave her at the *Cabezas* mand with English and French, in the charge of *Robert Doble*, to stay there, without attempting any chase, untill the returne of our Pinnaces. And then beare to *Rio Francisco*, where both Captaines landed with such force as *Mar. 13.* aforesaid, and charged them that had the charge of the Pinnaces to be there the fourth day next following without any faile. And thus knowing that the cariages went now daily from *Panama* to *Nombre de Dios*, we proceeded in covert through the woods, towards the high way that leadeth betweene them.

It is five leagues accounted by Sea, betweene *Rio Francisco* and *Nombre de Dios*, but that way which we marched by land, we found it above seaven leagues. We marched as in our former journey to *Panama*, both for order and silence, to the great wonder of the French Captaine & Company, who protested they knew not by any meanes how to recover the Pinnaces, if the *Symerons* (to whom what our Captaine commanded was a law, though they little regarded the French, as having no trust in them) should leave us. Our Captaine assured him there was no cause of doubt of them of whom he had had such former tryall.

When we were come within an English mile of the way we stayed all night, refreshing our selves in great stilnes in a most convenient place, where we heard the Carpenters, being many in number, working upon their Ships, as they usually doe by reason of the great heat of the day, in *Nombre de Dios*, & might heare the Moyles comming from *Panama*, by reason of  
*April 1.* the advantage of the ground. The next morning, upon hearing of that great (p. 75) number of Bells, the *Symerons* rejoyced exceedingly, as though there could not have befallen them a more joyfull accident, chiefly having beene disappoynted before. Now they all assured us we should have more gold and silver then al of us could bear away, as in truth it fell out.

For there came three Recoes, one of fifty Moyles, the other two of seaventy each, every of which caryed 300. pound waight of silver, which in all amounted to neere thirty Tun. We, putting our selves in readinesse, went downe neere the way to heare the Bels, where we stayed not long, but we saw of what mettall they were made, and tooke such hold on the heads of the foremost and hindmost Moyles that all the rest stayed and lay downe, as their maner is. These three Recoes were guarded with fortie five Souldiers or there abouts, fifteene to each Reco, which caused some exchange of Bullets and Arrowes for a time, in which conflict the French Captaine was sore wounded with hayle-shot in the belly, and one *Symeron* slaine. But in the end these Souldiers thought it the best way to leave their Moyles with us, and to seeke for more helpe abroad, in which meane time we tooke some paine to

ease some of the Moyles, which were heaviest loaden, of their cariages. And, being wearie, wee were contented with a few bars and quoits of gold, as we could well cary, burying about fifteen Tun of silver, partly in the boroughs which the great Landcrabs had made in the earth, and partly under old trees which are fallen thereabout, and partly in the sand and gravell of a River, not very deepe of water. Thus when about this businesse we had spent some two houres, and had disposed of all our matters, and were ready to march backe, the very selfe same way that we came, we heard both horse and foote comming as it seemed to the Moyles, for they never followed us after we were once entred the Woods, where the French Captaine by reason of his wound, not able to travell farther, stayed in hope that some rest would recover him better strength. But after we had marched some two leagues, upon the French Souldiers complaint that they missed one of their men also, examination being made whether he were slaine or no, it was found that he had drunke much Wine and overlading himselfe with pillage and hasting to goe before us, had lost himselfe in the Woods. And, as we afterwards knew, he was taken by the Spaniards that evening and, upon torture, discovered unto them where we had hidden our Treasure.

We continued our march all that and the next day towards *Rio Francisco*, in hope to meet our Pinnaces, but when we came thither, looking out to Sea, wee saw seven Spanish *April 2, 3.* Pinnaces which had beene searching all the Coasts thereabout, whereupon wee mightily suspected that they had taken or spoiled our Pinnaces, for that our Captaine had given so straight charge that they should repaire to this place this after-noone from the *Cabezas* where they rode, whence, to our sight, these Spaniards Pinnaces did come.

But the night before there had fallen very much raine, with much westerly winde which, as it enforced the *Spaniards* to returne home the sooner by reason of the storme, so it kept our pinnaces, that they could not keepe the appointment, because the wind was contrary & blewe so strong that with their (p. 76) Oares they could all that day get but halfe the way. Notwithstanding, if they had followed our Capt.

direction in setting forth over-night, while the wind served, they had arived at the place appointed with far lesse labor, but with far more danger, because that very day at noone, the *Spanish* Shalops mand out of purpose from *Nombre de Dios*, were come to this place to take our Pinnaces, imagining where we were, after they had heard of our intercepting of the Treasure.

Our Captaine, seeing the Shallops, feared least, having taken our Pinnaces, they had compelled our men by torture to confesse where his Fregat and Ships were. Therefore in this distresse and perplexity, the company misdoubting that all meanes of returne to their Country were cut off, and that their Treasure then served them to small purpose, our Captaine comforted and encouraged us all, saying we should venter no farther then he did, it was no time now to feare, but rather to haste to prevent that which was feared. "If the enemy have prevailed against our Pinnaces, which God forbid, yet they must have time to search them, time to examine the Mariners; time to execute their resolution after it is determined; before all these times be taken, we may get to our Ships if yee will, though not possibly by land, because of the Hills, Thickets and Rivers, yet by water. Let us therefore make a Raft with the trees that are heere in readines, as offering themselves being brought downe the River, happily this last storme, and put our selves to Sea. I will be one. Who will be the other?" *John Smith* offered himselfe, and two Frenchmen that could swim very well desired they might accompany our Captaine, as did the *Symerons* likewise (who had beene very earnest with our Captaine to have marched by land though it were 16. dayes journey, and in case the Ships had beene surprised, to have aboard alwaies with them) especially *Pedro*, who yet was faine to be left behind, because he could not row. The Raft was fitted and fast bound, a Sayle of a Bisket sacke prepared; an Oare was shaped out of a young Tree to serve in steed of a Rudder, to direct their course before the wind. At his departure hee comforted the Company by promising that if it pleased God he should put his foote in safety aboard his Fregat, he would, God willing, by

one means or other get them all aboard, in despite of all the *Spaniards* in the Indies.

In this maner putting off to the Sea, he sayled some three leagues, sitting up to the waste continually in water & at every surge of the wave to the armpits, for the space of sixe houres, upon this Raft. What with the parching of the Sunne and what with the beating of the salt water, they had all of them their skins much fretted away. At length God gave them the sight of two Pinnaces turning towards them with much wind, but with far greater joy to him that could easily conjecture and did cheerfully declare to those three with him, that they were our Pinnaces and that all was safe, so that there was no cause of feare. But see, the Pinnaces not seeing this Raft, nor suspecting any such matter, by reason of the wind and night growing on, were forced to run into a cover behind the point, to take succour for that night; which our Captaine seeing, and gathering, because they came not forth againe, that they would Anchor there, put his raft a shore, and ran by land a-(p. 77)bout the point, where he found them, who upon sight of him made as much hast as they could to take him and his company aboard.

For our Captaine, of purpose to try what haste they could and would make in extremity, himselfe ran in great haste, and so willed the other three with him, as if they had beene chased by the Enemy, which they the rather suspected, because they saw so few with him. And after his comming aboard, when, the[y] demanding how all his Company did, he answered coldly, well, they all doubted that all went scarce well. But he, willing to rid all doubts, and fill them with joy, tooke out of his bosome a Quoit of Gold, thanking God that our voyage was made. And to the Frenchmen he declared how their Captaine indeed was left behind, sore wounded and two of his Company with him, but it should be no hinderance to them.

That night our Captaine, with great paine of his Company, rowed to *Rio Francisco*, where he tooke the rest in, and the *April 4.* Treasure which wee had brought with us, making such expedition that by dawning of the day we set sayle backe



again, to our Fregat, and from thence directly to our ships where, as soone as we arrived, our Captain devidid by weight the Gold and silver into two even portions, between the French and the English.

About a fortnight after, when we had set all things in order and, taking out of our Ship all such necessaries as we needed for our Fregate, had left and given her to the Spaniards whome wee had all this time detayned, we put out of that Harbor, together with the French Ship, riding some few dayes among the *Cabezas*. In the meane time our Captaine made a secret composition with the *Symerons*, that twelve of our men and sixteene of theirs should make another voyage to get intelligence in what case the Country stood and, if it might be, recover Monsieur *Tetu* the French Captaine, at least wise to bring away that which was hidden in our former surprize and could not then be conveniently caried. *John Oxnam* and *Thomas Sherwell* were put in trust for this service, to the great content of the whole Company, who conceived greatest hope of them next our captaine, whom by no meanes they would condescend to suffer to adventure againe this time (yet he himselfe rowed to set them ashore at *Rio Francisco*) finding his labour well imployed both otherwise and also in saving one of those two Frenchmen that had remained willingly to accompany their wounded Captaine.

For this Gentleman, having escaped the rage of the *Spaniards*, was now comming towards our Pinnace, where he fell downe on his knees, blessing God for the time that ever our Captaine was borne, who now beyond all his hope was become his deliverer. He being demanded what was become of his Captaine and other fellow, shewed that within halfe an houre after our departure the *Spaniards* had overgotten them, and tooke his Captaine and other fellow. He onely escaped by flight, having cast away all his carriage, and among the rest one Box of Jewels, that he might fly the swifter from the pursuers; but his fellow tooke it up and burthened himselfe so sore that he could make no speed, as easily he might otherwise, if he would have cast downe his pillage, and laid aside his covetous mind. As for the silver which we had

hidden thereabout in the earth (p.78) and the sands, he thought that it was all gone, for that he thought there had beene neere 2000. Spaniards and Negroes there to dig and search for it.

This report notwithstanding, our purpose held and our men were sent to the said place, where they found that the earth, every way a mile distant, had beene digged and turned up in every place of any likelihood, to have any thing hidden in it. And yet neverthesse, for all that narrow search, all our mens labour was not quite lost, but so considered that the third day after their departure they all returned safe and cheerefull with as much silver as they and all the *Symerons* could find (*viz.* thirteene bars of silver, and some few quoits of Gold), with which they were presently embarqued without empeachment, repairing with no lesse speed then joy to our Fregat.

Now was it high time to thinke of homewards, having sped our selves as we desired, and therefore our Captaine concluded to visit *Rio Grand* once againe, to see if he could meete with any sufficient Ship or Bark to cary victuall enough to serve our turne homewards, in which we might in safety and security embarque our selves, the French-men (having formerly gone from us as soone as they had their shares at our first returne with the Treasure, as being very desirous to returne home into their Country, and our Captaine as desirous to dismisse them, as they were to be dismissed, for that he foresaw they could not in their Ship avoid the danger of being taken by the Spaniards, if they should make out any Men of war for them while they lingred on the Coast, and having also beene then againe releevd with victuals by us) now at our meeting of them againe were very loath to leave us, and therefore accompanied us very kindly as far up as *S. Barnards*, and farther would, but that they durst not adventure so great danger, for that we had intelligence that the Fleete was ready to set sayle for *Spaine*, riding at the entry of *Carthagena*.

Thus we departed from them, passing hard by *Carthagena*, in the sight of all the Fleete, with a Flag of Saint *George* in the maine top of our Fregat, with silke streamers and ancients downe to the water, sayling forward with a large wind, till we came within two leagues of the River, being all low land,

and darke night, where, to prevent the over-shooting of the River in the night, we lay off and on bearing small saile, till that about mid-night the wind veering to the Eastward, by two of the clocke in the morning, a Fregat from *Rio Grand* passed hard by us, bearing also but small sayle. We saluted them with our shot and Arrowes. They answered us with Bases. But we got aboard them, and tooke such order that they were content against their wils to depart a shoare and to leave us this Fregat, which was of twenty five Tun, loaded with Maiz, and Hens and Hogs, and some Honey, in very good time fit for our use; for the Honey especially was a notable releever and preserver of our crased people.

The next morning, as soone as we set those Spaniards a shoare on the maine, we set our course for the *Cabezas* without any stop, whither we came about five dayes after. And being at anchor, presently we hove out all the Maiz aland, saving three Buts which we kept for our store and carying all our provisions a shoare, we (p. 79) brought both our Fregats on the *Carine*, and new tallowed them. Here we stayed about a seavenight, trimming and rigging our Fregats, boarding and stowing our provisions, tearing abroad and burning our Pinnaces, that the *Symerons* might have the yron-worke.

About a day or two before our departure our Captaine willed *Pedro* and three of the chiefest of the *Symerons* to goe through both his Fregats, to see what they liked, promising to give it them whatsoever it were, so it were not so necessary as that he could not returne into *England* without it. And for their wives, he would himselfe seeke out some silks or linnen that might gratifie them, which while he was choosing, out of his Trunckes, the Cymeter which Captaine *Tetu* had given to our Captaine chanced to be taken forth in *Pedroes* sight, which he seing grew so much in liking thereof that he accounted of nothing else in respect of it, and preferred it before all that could be given him; yet, imagining that it was no lesse esteemed of our Captaine, durst not himselfe open his mouth to crave or commend it, but made one *Francis Tucker* to be his meane to breake his mind, promising to give him a fine quoit of gold, which yet he had in store, if he would but move our Captaine for it; and to our Captaine himselfe

he would give foure other great quoits which he had hidden, intending to have reserved them till another voyage. Our Captaine, being accordingly moved by *Francis Tucker*, could have been content to have made no such exchange, but yet desirous to content him that had deserved so well, he gave it him with many good words, who received it with no little joy, affirming that if he should give his wife and children (which he loved dearly) in lieu of it, he could not sufficiently recompence it (for he would present his King with it, who he knew would make him a great man, even for this very gifts sake), yet in gratuity and steed of other requitall of this jewell, he desired our Captaine to accept these foure peeces of gold, as a token of his thankfulnesse to him, and a pawne of his faithfulness during life. Our Captaine received it in most kind sort, but tooke it not to his own benefit, but caused it to be cast into the whole adventure, saying if he had not beene set forth to that place, hee had not attained such a commoditie, and therefore it was just that they which bare part with him of his burthen in setting him to Sea should enjoy the proportion of his benefit whatsoever at his returne.

Thus with good love and liking we tooke our leave of that people, setting over to the Ilands of <sup>1</sup> whence the next day after, we set sayle towards *Cape Saint Anthony*, by which we past with a large wind. But presently, being to stand for *th'Havana*, we were faine to ply to the windward some three or foure dayes; in which plying we fortun'd to take a small Bark, in which were two or three hundred Hides and one most necessary thing, which stood us in great steed, *viz.* a Pumpe, which we set in our Fregat. Their Barke, because it was nothing fit for our service, our Captaine gave them to cary them home. And so returning to *Cape S. Anthony* and landing there, we refreshed our selves, and besides great store of Turtles egges, found by day in the <sup>1</sup> we tooke 200. and 50. Turtles by night. We powdred (p. 80) and dryed some of them, which did us good service. The rest continued but a small time.

There were at this time, belonging to *Carthagene*, *Nombre de Dios*, *Rio Grand*, *Santa Martha*, *Rio de Hacha*, *Venta Cruz*,

<sup>1</sup> Blank in the original.

*Veragua, Nicaragua, the Henduras, Jamaica &c.* above 200 fregats, some of 120. Tunnes other but of ten or twelve Tun, but the most of thirty or forty Tun, which all had entercourse betweene *Carthagene* and *Nombre de Dios*, the most of which, during our abode in those parts we tooke, and some of them twice or thrice each, yet never burnt or sunck any unlesse they were made out Men of war against us, or laid as stales to entrap us. And of al the men taken in these severall vessels, wee never offred any kind of violence to any, after they were once come under our power, but either presently dismissed them in safety or, keeping them with us some longer time (as some of them wee did), we alwayes Provided for their sustenance as for our selves, and secured them from the rage of the *Symerons* against them, till, at last, the danger of their discovering where our Ships lay being overpast (for which onely cause we kept them prisoners), wee set them also free.

Many strange Birds, Beasts and Fishes, besides Fruits, Trees, Plants, and the like, were seene and observed of us in this journey, which willingly we pretermit as hastning to the end of our voyage, which from this Cape of Saint *Anthony*, we intended to finish by sayling the directest and speediest way homeward, and accordingly even beyond our owne expectation most happily performed. For whereas our Captaine had purposed to touch at *New-found-land*, and there to have watered, which would have beene some let unto us, though we stood in great want of water, yet God Almighty so provided for us, by giving us good store of raine water, that we were sufficiently furnished, and within twenty three dayes wee past from the Cape of *Florida* to the Iles of *Silley*, and so arrived at *Plimouth* on Sunday about Sermon-time, August the ninth 1573. At what time the newes of our Captaines returne brought unto his, did so speedily passe over all the Church, and surpasse their minds with desire and delight to see him, that very few or none remained with the Preacher, all hastning to see the evidence of Gods love and blessing towards our Gracious Queene and Countrey, by the fruite of our Captaines labour and successe.

*Soli Deo gloria.*

FINIS.

# The Voyage of John Oxnam

*of Plimmouth*

to the west India, and over the straight of  
Dariene into the South Sea. *Anno* 1575

Written by the foresaid *Lopez Vaz*<sup>2</sup>  
in the said discourse

THERE was another Englishman who, hearing of the spoyle that Francis Drake had done upon the coast of Nueva Espanna, and of his good adventure and safe returne home, was thereby provoked to undertake the like enterprise, with a ship of 140 tunnes, and 70 men, and came thither, and had also conference with the foresaide Negros. And hearing that the golde and silver which came upon the Mules from Panama to Nombre de Dios, was now conducted with souldiers, he determined to do that which never any man before enterprised: and landed in that place where Francis Drake before had had his conference with the Negros.

This man covered his ship after he had brought her aground with boughes of trees, and hid his great Ordinance in the ground, and so not leaving any man in his ship, he tooke two small pieces of ordinance, and his calivers, and good store of victuals, and so went with the Negros about twelve leagues into the maine land, to a river that goeth to the South sea, and there he cut wood and made a Pinnesse, which was five and fortie foote by the keele. And having made this Pinnesse, he went into the South sea, carrying sixe Negros with him to be his guides, and so went to the Iland of Pearles, which is five and twentie leagues from Panama, which is in the way

*The Iland of  
pearles 25.  
leagues from  
Panama.*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from Hakluyt, Richard, *Principal Navigations*, Glasgow, 1904, x, 77-81.

<sup>2</sup> pp. ix, xliii, xlviii, *ante*, Document No. 29.

that they come from Peru to Panama, and there he was ten dayes without shewing himselfe to any man, to (p. 78) see if he might get any ship that came from Peru.

At last there came a small Barke by, which came from Peru from a place called Quito, which he tooke and found in her sixtie thousand pezos of golde, and much victuals. But not contenting himselfe with this prize, hee stayed long without sending away his prize or any of the men, and in the ende of sixe dayes after, hee tooke another Barke which came from Lima, in which he tooke an hundred thousand pezos of silver [III. 527.] in barres, with the which hee thought to have gone, & entred the river, but first he went into the Islands to see if he could find any pearles: where he found a few, and so returned to his pinnesse againe, and so sailing to the river from whence he came, and comming neere to the mouth of the sayd river, hee sent away the two prizes that hee tooke, and with his pinnesse he went up the river.

The Negros that dwelt in the Island of pearls, the same night that he went from them, went in Canoas to Panama, and the Governour within two dayes sent foure barkes 100 men, 25 in every one and Negros to rowe, with the captaine John de Ortega, which went to the Island of pearles, and there had intelligence, which way the English men were gone, and following them he met by the way the ships which the English men had taken, of whom he learned that the English men were gone up the river.

And he going thither, when he came to the mouth of the river, the captaine of Panama knew not which way to take, because there were three partitions in the river to goe up in, and being determind to goe up the greatest of the three rivers, he saw comming downe a lesser river many feathers of hennes, which the Englishmen had pulled to eate. And being glad thereof, hee went up that river where hee saw the feathers, and after that he had bene in that river foure daies, he descried the Englishmens pinnesse upon the sands, and comming to her, there were no more then sixe Englishmen, whereof they killed one, and the other five escaped away, and in the pinnesse he found (p. 79) nothing but victuals. But

this captaine of Panama not herewith satisfied, determined to seeke out the Englishmen by land, and leaving twenty men in his pinnesses, hee with 80 shot went up the countrey. Hee had not gone halfe a league, but hee found a house made of boughs, where they found all the Englishmens goods, and the gold and silver also, and carying it backe to their pinnesses, the Spaniards were determined to goe away, without following the English men any further.

But at the end of three dayes, the English captaine came to the river with all his men, and above 200 Negros, and set upon the Spaniards with great fury. But the Spaniards having the advantage of trees which they stood behind, did easily prevaile, and killed eleven Englishmen, and five Negros, and tooke other seven Englishmen alive, but of the Spaniards, two were slaine and five sore hurt.

*A skirmish  
between the  
English men,  
and the  
Spaniards.*

Among other things, the Spaniards enquired of the Englishmen which they tooke, why they went not away in fifteene dayes liberty which they had. They answered, that their captaine had commanded them to carie all that golde and silver which they had, to the place where they had left their shippe, and they had promised him to carie it, although they made three or foure journeys of it, for hee promised to give them part of it besides their wages. But the mariners would have it by and by, and so their Captaine being angry because they would not take his word, fell out with them, and they with him, in so much that one of the company would have killed the Captaine. So that the Captaine would not have them to carie the treasure, but sayd hee would seeke Negros to carie it, and so he went and sought for Negros, and bringing those Negros to carie it, hee met with the five English men that hee had left in his pinnesse which ranne from the Spaniards, and the rest also which ran from the house, and they told him what the Spaniards had done. And then, making friendship with all his men, hee promised them halfe of all the treasure if they got (p. 80) it from the Spaniards, and the Negros promised to helpe him with their bowes and arrowes, and thereupon they came to seeke the Spaniards. And now that some of his company were killed and taken, hee



thought it best to returne to his ship, and to passe backe for England.

The Spanish captaine hearing this, having buried the dead bodies, and having gotten all things into his barkes, and taking the English men and their pinnesse with him, he returned to Panama: so the voyage of that English man did not prosper with him, as hee thought it would have done.

Nowe when the foure barkes were come to Panama, they sent advise also to Nombre de dios, and they of Nombre de dios sent also from them other foure barkes which (as the Spaniards say) found the English ship where she was hid, and brought her to Nombre de dios.

And that the Viceroy of Peru, not thinking it good to suffer fiftie English men to remaine in the countrey, sent a servant of his called Diego de Frees, with a hundreth and fifty shot into the mountaines to seeke them out, who found them making of certaine Canoas to goe into the North sea, and there to take some barke or other. Some of them were sicke, and were taken, and the rest fled with the Negros, who in the end betrayed them to the Spaniards, so that they were brought to Panama.

*The English  
betrayed to the  
Spaniards.*

And the Justice of Panama asked the English captaine whether hee had the Queenes licence, or the licence of any other Prince or Lord for his attempt. And he answered he had none, whereupon hee and all his company were condemned to dye, and so were all executed, saving the Captaine, the Master, the Pilot, and five boyes which were caried to Lima, and there the Captaine was executed with the other two, but the boyes be yet living.

*The death of  
John Oxnam.*

[III. 528.] The King of Spaine having intelligence of these matters, sent 300 men of warre against those Negros which had assisted those English men, which before were slaves unto the Spaniards, and, as before is sayd, (p. 81) fled from their masters unto those mountaines, and so joynded themselves to the Englishmen, to the ende they might the better revenge themselves on the Spaniards.

At the first comming of these 300 souldiers, they tooke many of the Negros, and executed great justice upon them:

But after a season, the Negros grew wise and wary, and prevented the Spaniards, so that none of them could be taken.

The Spaniards of that country marveled much at this one thing, to see that since the conquering of this land, there have bene many Frenchmen that have come to those Countreys, but never saw English men there but onely those two of whom I have spoken. And although there have many Frenchmen bene on the coast, yet never durst they put foote upon land, only those two English men adventured it, and did such exploits, as are before remembred.

All these things comming to the hearing of the king of Spaine, he provided two Gallies well appointed to keepe those coastes: and the first yeere they tooke sixe or seven French ships. And after that this was knowen, there were no more Englishmen or Frenchmen of warre that durst adventure to approach the coast, untill this present yeere 1586, that the aforesayd Francis Drake, with a strong fleete of 24 ships arrived there, and made spoile of Santo Domingo, Carthagena, and S. Augustine, things that are knowen to all the worlde. But it is likely that if the King of Spaine live, he will in time provide sufficient remedy, to keepe his countreys and subjects from the invasion of other nations.

*The English  
mens comming  
to the Indies,  
caused the  
king of Spaine  
to build gallies  
to keepe the  
Seas.*



## The voyage of Master Andrew Barker *of Bristol*

with two ships, the one called the Ragged staffe, the other the Beare, to the coast of Terra firma, and the Bay of Honduras in the West Indies, in the yeere 1576

Wherein the reasons are premised which mooved him to set forth this voyage against the Spaniards: collected out of certaine notes and examinations touching this enterprise by M. Richard Hakluyt.

FIRST of all Andrew Barker, having abode in one of the Canary Islands called Tenerif for a certaine time and returning home, left behind him Charles Chester (the sonne of Dominic Chester merchant of Bristol) to learn the language. Now the sayd Andrew Barker forthwith upon his arrivall in England, in November, 1574, freighted a small ship (named the Speedwell of Bristol) to goe for the Canaries with cloth and other merchandise of a great value. He sent also one John Drue of Bastable as his Factor to make sale and dispose of the said goods, who when he arrived at Tenerif, landed the marchandize, and sent home the barke with some small quantity of wine, making account to sell the sayd wares to greater advantage in providing wines and sugar for the lading of another ship, which Andrew Barker had appointed to send thither. Also according to this his purpose the said Andrew in March following sent a ship called the Christopher of Dartmouth, captaine whereof was one Henry Roberts of

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from Hakluyt, edition previously cited, x, 82-88.

Bristol: who when he had landed in Tenerif, and was in good hope to find the lading of his ship in a readines, contrary to his expectation, was suddenly cast into prison, the Spaniards alleaging that Andrew Barker was accused to the inquisition by Charles (p. 83) Chester, whereupon his goods were confiscat, his factor John Drue was attached, and he also (the said captaine Roberts) being as they supposed Barkers partner, was in like sort to be imprisoned. In fine all the foresaid commodities appertaining to the said Andrew and his brother M. John Barker and others to the value of 1700 pound and upwards (as it doth appeare by proofes of record in the Admiralty) were utterly lost, being confiscat to the said inquisition. Howbeit captaine Roberts by the meanes of a frier was delivered out of prison (which cost him all the marchandize he brought with him in his ship) and so returned with dead freight to the summe of 200 pound that afterwards Andrew Barker discharged.

In recompense of which injurie (for that no suite prevaileth against the inquisition of Spaine) & also to recover his losse of the Spaniards themselves, at his owne charge with the help of his friends hee furnished two barkes for the West Indies, the greater of which barkes was called the Ragged staffe, himselfe being captaine, and Philip Roche Master thereof, the other named the Beare had one William Coxe of Limehouse for her Master and captaine. And thus all our company being imbarked at Plimmoth on Whitsonday in the beginning of June, we set forward, and in our course we met with a ship of London, & afterwards with another ship, but tooke nothing from either of them.

Our first arrival was at one of the Island of Cape Verde, named Del sal, vz. the Isle of salt, where we tooke certain fishes called Tortoises: and there we remained one night and halfe the day following. And from thence wee came to the Isle of Maio, being distant from Isla del sal, 14 or 15 leagues, where we tooke in fresh water and traffiqued with certaine Portugals inhabiting in that place, of whom we had some victuals for knives and beades: and there we remained one day and one night: but our trumpetter was trecherously

*Isla del sal.*

[III. 529.]  
*The Isle of  
Maio.*

slaine by those Portugals, in revenge of which murther we set on fire two of their small villages.

*Two villages  
burnt.*

From this Island (p. 84) wee shaped our course over the maine Ocean toward the West Indies, and arrived happily at the Island of Trinidad, and had conference with certaine Indians inhabitants thereof, who gave us very friendly and courteous entertainment: and here we set up a pinnesse which we caried forth in the Ragged staffe, and traffiqued with the foresayd Indians for victuals.

*The Isle of  
Trinidad.*

And after we had spent sixe dayes in this place we departed, and arrived next at the Isle of Margarita, where we tooke a small Spanish ship having in her certaine pitch and 30 tuns of Canarie wines whereof we reserved 4 or 5 tunnes to our selves, dismissing them without any further damage. Thence (having remained there a day) wee set saile to the Island of Curazao, where we remained a day & a night, & tooke in fresh water, at what time by the inhabitants of that Island (being few of them Spaniards, & the most part Indians) 14 of our men were treacherously hurt, but none slaine.

*The Isle of  
Margarita.*

*The Isle of  
Curazao.*

And from thence we departed for the maine land Southwards, to a certain bay, and there we abode 3 daies, but nothing of any reckoning was there atchieved. From thence we arrived at Cape de la Vela, where grewe a contention betweene our Captaine M. Andrew Barker and his Master Philip Roche, upon comparisons made betweene them concerning the knowledge of Navigation, and about other quarels, which quarels afterward were an occasion of further mischiefe.

*Cape de la  
Vela.*

Hence we sailed to the bay of Tulu (which is about 18 leagues Southwestward from Carthagera) where wee tooke a Frigat and certaine treasure therein to the value of 500 pound, namely barres of gold, and lingots of silver, and some quantity of corriento or coyne in rials of plate, and certaine greene stones called Emerauds, whereof one very great, being set in gold, was found tied secretly about the thigh of a frier. Here having stayed three dayes, and now being pursued by Spanish men of warre, wee departed with the sayd treasure, and left the Frigat behind us, all (p. 85) which treasure at

*Tulu.*

that instant was committed to the keeping of our capitaine Andrew Barker.

*Nombre de dios.*

From thence we passed to Nombre de dios, and so foorth to the mouth of the river of Chagre 18 leagues distant from Nombre de dios towards the Northwest. There wee landed 10 of our men, who travelled up into the woods three or foure daies to seeke the Simerons, (which are certaine valiant Negros fled from their cruel masters the Spaniards, and are become mortall enemies, ready to joyne with the English and French against them) but in their search they could find none of them. And though our men returned all free from peril of the enemye, yet the most part of the sayd ten persons presently fell sicke, and divers other of our company: so that within 14 dayes 8 or 9 of our men died of a disease called there the Calentura, which is a hote and vehement fever.

*Simerons  
rebels to the  
Spaniards.*

*Veragua.*

And passing betweene Chagre and Veragua, we tooke a Frigat, and some quantity of golde wee found therein. In this Frigat were 23 Spaniards whom wee set on shore, and two Flemings, them wee brought into England with us. Wee had therein also foure cast pieces of Ordinance, 3 harquebuzes on crocke, 16 Spanish calivers, and a booke of Navigation: and in this Frigat some of our company came homeward into England.

Thus passing forward in our course, we came to Veragua, where capitaine Barker & Philip Roche his Master, fought upon the foresayd quarel, in which combat the capitaine was hurt a little in the cheeke. Here we sanke our Admirall the Ragged staffe, because of her great leakage, and imbarked part of our company in the Spanish Frigat, which immediately before we had surprised.

*The bay of  
Honduras.*

From hence (by the direction of certain Indians) we sayled into the gulfes of the Honduras: there we tooke a barke wherein were rials of plate, to the value of 100 pound, Maiz or Indian wheat, hennes, beefe and other small things. In this barke also were certaine Spaniards, whereof one was the Scrivano or (p. 86) secretary of Carthagena, who (being a man of some note) was put to his ransome, which was payd in gold: the rest were dismissed freely.

And after passing by divers Islands, we arrived at an Island called S. Francisco, being in the mouth of the great bay, called the Honduras. And within two dayes next after our arrivall there, William Coxe and divers others (which for certaine causes shalbe namelesse) came aboard the ship wherein the captaine then was, and disposessed him as well of the sayd ship, as of the treasure in the same, and forthwith put our captaine with violence on shore, where he and one Germane Weiborne fought together, and were both wounded. After this our captaine desirous to come on boord, was resisted by the persons aforesayd, who answered him that he should not come on boord till they were ready to depart.

*The Isle of  
S. Francisco.*

*A conspiracie  
against the  
Captaine.*

Our men had appointed ten persons of their company for the keeping of this Island of S. Francisco: but about breake of the day, on a certaine morning, sixtie Spaniards arriving secretly in the Island, surprised our people on the sudden, what time there were thirtie of our men on shore: in which surprise they slew our captaine, M. Andrew Barker with eight others, namely, one Wilde of Bristol, and Michael our Chirurgian, Richard of Bristol, Thomas Sampoole, Thomas Freeman, Thomas Nightingale, Robert Jackson, Walter Newton; and the captaines boy and one other were hurt. Now after that William Coxe, and the rest (which were aboard the barke) perceived that the captaine, & some others were slain, he received them that were living into the ship, having before that time refused some of them. After this misfortune they went to an Island distant from thence a league, where Coxe devided a chaine of gold (which was found in the captaines chest after his death) amongst the company.

[III. 530.]  
*M. Andrew  
Barker and 8  
others slaine  
by the  
Spaniards.*

After this Coxe went in a pinesse (which wee tooke at the Isle of Sant Francisco) with certaine others of our men in a skyffe, to the towne of Truxillio, in the bay of Honduras, (p. 87) which towne they surprised, and had therein wine and oyle as much as they would, and divers other good things, but no gold nor silver, nor any other treasure which they would confesse. But before they could returne to their company, those that were in the barkes were had in chase by men of warre, whereby they were inforced every man to shift

*The towne of  
Truxillo  
sacked by the  
English.*



for himselfe: so for haste they left those that were in the skiffe (being 8 persons) in the bay of Honduras: what became of them afterward God knoweth.

Hereupon we determined to saile for England, and being in the maine sea homeward bound, about 60 leagues from the Isle of S. Francisco, the Frigat wherein was the treasure for the adventurers, and that which pertained to the captaine to the value of 2000 pound, being overset with sayle, with a flaw of wind was overthrowen, and all the goods therein perished. Therein also were 14 persons drowned, and nine saved, whereof William Coxe and William Gillam were two. After this Philip Roche, Master of the Admirall called the Ragged staffe, died.

*The death of  
Philip Roche  
master of the  
Ragged staffe.  
Their arrival  
in the Isle of  
Sillie.*

And thus at length, (by the helpe of God) we arrived in the Isle of Silly neere Cornwall where we left our Frigat which we built new upon the shore of the Honduras, having in her at our landing ten botisios<sup>1</sup> of oyle, and the foure cast Peeces that were in John Oxnam's Frigat (which the yeere before was taken in the streit of Dariene), three harquebuzes on crocke, certaine calivers, and certaine treasure: Where William Cox and Andrew Browne devided the treasure amongst their company, delivering to some five pound, to some sixe pound, to some seven pound, to some more, as every man was thought to have deserved. The barke and the rest of the Ordinance was left in the Island, to the use of Andrew Browne.

*Certaine  
Ordinance of  
John Oxnam  
recovered  
from the  
Spamiards.*

Divers of our company, upon our arrivall at Plimmouth were committed to prison at the suite of M. John Barker of Bristol, brother unto our Captaine M. Andrew Barker, as accessaries to our captains death, and betrayers of him unto the enemye. (p. 88) And after straight examination of many of us, by letters of direction from her Majesties privie Counsell, the chiefe malefactors were onely chastised with long imprisonment, where indeede before God they had deserved to die: whereof some, although they escaped the rigor of mans law, yet could they not avoide the heavy judgement of God, but shortly after came to miserable ends. Which may be example to others to shew themselves faithfull and obedient in all honest causes to their captaines and governours.

<sup>1</sup> Botijas, demijohns.

# The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, *Knight*

## SECTION LXVII

A LITTLE to the South-wards of the Iland of Pearle, betwixt seven and eight degrees, is the great River of *Saint Buena Ventura*. It falleth into the South Sea with three mouthes, the head of which is but a little distant from the North Sea. In *Anno* 1575. or 1576. one *John Oxman* of *Plymouth*, going into the west *Indies*, joyned with the *Symarons*.

*John Oxmans  
Voyage to the  
South Sea.*

These are fugitive Negroes, and for the bad intreatie which their Masters had given them were then retyred into the mountaines and lived upon the spoyle of such Spaniards as they could master, and could never be brought into obedience till by composition they had a place limmitted them for their freedome, where they should live quietly by themselves. At this day they have a (p. 165) great habitation neere *Panama*, called *Saint Iago de los Negros*, well peopled, with all their Officers and Commaunders of their owne, save onely a Spanish Governour<sup>2</sup>.

*What the  
Symarons are.*

*Their  
habitation.*

By the assistance of these *Symarons*, hee brought to the head of this River, by peecemeale and in many journeyes, a small pinnace. Hee fitted it by time in warlike manner and, with the choice of his Company, put himselfe into the South Sea, where his good hap was to meete with a cople of shippes of trade, and in the one of them a great quantitie of gold. And amongst other things two peeces of speciall estimation, the one a Table of massie gold, with Emralds, sent for a

*Their  
assistance.*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins Knight, in his Voyage to the South Sea, Anno Domini 1593*. London, 1622.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Documents Nos. 71, 72. By the time Hawkins wrote, the Vallano negroes, also, had come to terms with the Spaniards and agreed to reside "like Christians" under government oversight, in a town of their own, just as he says.

present to the King; the other a Lady of singular beautie, married, and a mother of Children. The latter grewe to be his perdition.

*John Oxman capitulateth with them.* For hee had capitulated with these *Symarons*, that their part of the bootie should be onely the prisoners, to the ende to execute their malice upon them (such was the rancor they had conceived against them, for that they had beene the Tyrants of their libertie). But the Spaniards, not contented to have them their slaves who lately had beene their Lords, added to their servitude cruell intreaties. And they, againe, to feede their insatiable revenges, accustomed to rost and eate the hearts of all those Spaniards, whom at any time they could lay hand upon.

*His folly, And Breach of promise.* *John Oxman* (I say) was taken with the love of this Lady, and to winne her good will, what through her teares and perswasions, and what through feare and detestation of their barbarous inclinations, breaking promise with the *Symarons*, yeelded to her request, which was to give the prysoners liberty with their ships, for that they were not usefull for him. Notwithstanding *Oxman* kept the Lady, who had in one of the restored shippes, eyther a Sonne or a Nephew. This

*His pursuite.* Nephew with the rest of the Spaniards made all the hast they could to *Panama*, and they used such diligence as within fewe howers some were dispatched to seeke those who little thought so quickly to bee overtaken.

*And evill Fortune.* The pursuers, approaching the River, were doubtfull by which of the afore-remembred three mouths they should take their way. In this wavering one of the Souldiers espied certaine feathers, of Henns and some boughes of trees (which they had cut off to make their way) swimming downe one of the Outlets. This was light sufficient to guide them in their course. They entred the River and followed the tracke, as farre as their Frigats had water sufficient; and then with part of their Souldiers in their boates and the rest on the bankes on eyther side, they marched day and night in pursuite of their enemies, and in fine came uppon them unexpected at the (p. 166) head of the River, making good cheare in their Tents and devided in two partialities about the partition and

sharing of their gold. Thus were they surprised, and not one escaped.

Some say that *John Oxman* fled to the *Symarons*, but they utterly denied to receive or succour him, for that he had broken his promise; the onely Objection they cast in his teeth was that if he had held his word with them hee never had fallen into this extremitie. *He flyeth to the Symarons.*

In fine hee was taken; and after his shippe also was possessed by the Spaniards; which he had hid in a certaine Cove and covered with boughes of trees, in the guard and custodie of some foure or five of his followers. All his Company were conveyed to *Panama* and there were ymbarked for *Lyma*; where a processe was made against them by the Justice, and all condemned and hanged as Pirates.

This may be a good example to others in like occasions: first, to shunne such notorious sinnes, which cannot escape punishment in this life, nor in the life to come: for the breach of faith is reputed amongst the greatest faults which a man can commit. Secondly, not to abuse another mans wife; much lesse to force her, both being odious to God and man. Thirdly to beware of mutenies, which seldome or never are seene to come to better ends; for where such trees flourish, the fruite of force must eyther bee bitter, sweete, or very sower. And therefore, seeing wee vaunt our selves to bee Christians and make profession of his law, who forbiddeth all such vanities, let us faithfully shunne them, that wee may partake the end of that hope which our profession teacheth and promiseth. *Breach of faith never unpunished.*



# INDEX

- Acla, coast, harbour, Canoa's retreat to, lxi-iii, 175 (*see* Canoa); Drake's retirement to, base at, xxxix, 40, 44, 47, 60; Oxenham at, li, n. 7, 100, 110-11, 124, 126-8, 137; patrol of, 151 (*see* Erasso, Miguel de); pirates off, 125-6, 145; reconnoitring expeditions to, lx, 126, 136, 144-5, 149, 156, 159-60, 167, 180, 202; settlement, foreign, feared, 113, 125, 130, 173; Spanish, urged, 17, 113, 135, 139, 236; strategic position of, 110
- Acles, Francisco de, *see* Barker, Andrew
- Allen, Richard, 292
- Alva, Francisco de, lvi, 153, 336
- Ambile, corsair, xxiii, 5
- Antilles, trade of, affected, 27, 32
- Arana, Pedro de, lxi-ii, 154, 189, 223, ns. 2, 3, 232, n. 5, 233. *See table of contents*
- Archives of the Indies, General, vii; staff of, lx, x
- Armada, English, report concerning, 50, 62, 174
- Audiencia*, defined, 9, n. 2, 81, n. 2. *For* despatches from, *see table of contents*
- Balsas River, 129, 137
- Barker, Andrew, expedition of, xlviii, 1, lv-lix, 187-8, 192-3, 196-7, 198-9, 204, 208-10, 333-8; lists of his men, 102-8
- Barker, John, 338
- Bastimento(s) Islands, 5; Drake at, xxxv, 23, 58, n. 2, 267-9
- Bear*, the, 1, 74, n. 5, 313, 315, 333
- Bermudez Plata, Don Cristóbal de, ix
- Berrio, Hernando de, 64-5, 81, n. 3, 82-92, 140
- Bienville, corsair, xxiii, 7
- Bland, Captain, *see* Blondel, Paul
- Blondel, Paul, xviii, xxii-iii, xxxii-iii
- Bocas del Drago, corsair base, lviii, 147, 152, 188
- Bontemps, Jean, xviii, xxiii
- Borburata, xvi, n. 1, 36
- Bourne, Nicholas, viii
- Butler, Henry, lxiii
- Butler, John, xlix, lii, lv, lxii-iii, 112, 118, 200, 201, 203, 205, 213, 215, 228, 238-9, 240-1; his map of Vallano, 219
- Cabezas, *see* Cativa(s) Headland
- Calderon, Diego, 64, n. 2, 73; services at Campos River, 82-92
- Caledonia Pass, li, n. 7
- Campos River, Drake's attack at, viii, xlv, 56-61, 65-6, 68, 71, 73, 77-8, 82-92, 109
- Canoa, Jacob, Jacobo, Jacome or Peter, lxi-iii, 175, 182, 195, 201, 203, 212-3, 216, 221, 226-30, 239; described, 240-1
- Canoba, *see* Canoa
- Cardona, Nicholas, xxv, n. 2, xxvi, n. 2
- Carreto Pass, 1, n. 7
- Cartagena, Drake's attempt on, xxxix, 42-3, 270-2; no trade at, xl, 283-8; port of call, xxviii
- Catalina, village, liv, lxi, 173, 176, 179, 180, 189
- Cativa(s) Headland, located, xxxiv, n. 1; Drake's base at, xxxi, xxxiv-v, 16-7, 19, 25, 26, 76, 259, 282, 291, 313, 315, 317, 319, 322, 324; John Noble at, xlv
- Cativas, the, xxxiv
- Chagre River, Barker at, 336; Drake at, xxiv, xxxi, xxxiv, xxxvi, 269; French at, xxii; John Noble at, xlv; significance of interference with trade on, xxvii-lx, xxxvi, 34; traffic on, plundered, etc., 3, 5, 8, 12-23, 25-7, 29, 31-2, 47, 50, 76, 79, 85, 94, 100, 109, 124, 141, 147, 168, 269
- Chalona, *see* Butler, John
- Chapera, 118. *See* Pearl Islands

- Chucunaque River, liv, 132, *n.* 2, 179, *n.* 1, 297, *n.* 1
- Cimarrones*, defined, xix; aggressions of, 9-10, 21, 25, 33, 46; Barker seeks, 336; dangers and results of foreigners' alliance with, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 69, 71-2, 124-5, 126-7, 130, 132, 136, 160, 166; described, xli, 259, 295-6, 339; Drake's relations with, xxxvi, xxxviii, xl, xliv, 274, 279-82, 293-4, 322, 324-5, 326-7; expedition against Puerto Bello negroes, *see* García de Melo, Luis; Horseley and, xlvii; loyalty to allies, lxiii, 236; Oxenham's relations with, li-ii, liv, 110-1, 117, 170-7, 327, 340-1; peace with, 233, 236, 339; participation in attack on Venta Cruces, xlii-iii, 47, 49, 72, 109, 295-311; at Campos River, xlv, 60, 65, 68, 71, 73, 77, 82, 86-8, 91, 109, 123, 317, 318; in events on Pearl Islands, 111, 115, 117, 120, 122; in action on Balsas River (Catalina), 129, 133, 137, 173; queen captured, 207; various bodies of, xxxix, xl, *n.* 3, 235, 236; war on, xlv, *n.* 3, lix-lxiii, 9-10, 33, 110, 113, 116, 135, 138, 139, 144, 146, 154-5, 159, 185, 191, 201-2, 207, 211, 213-4, 217, 225, 229-30, 238-9
- 'Commerce, aggressive,' xvii; *see* Chagre River, interference with trade on, traffic on; Fleet system, Spanish, etc.
- Concepción de Veragua, *see* Veragua
- Corbett, Sir Julian, cited, viii, xvi, *n.* 2, xvii, *n.* 2, xix, *n.* 2, xxi, *ns.* 1, 2, xxiii, *n.* 4, xxv, *n.* 1, xxx, *n.* 1, xxxvi, *n.* 1, xxxviii, *n.* 1, xlv, *n.* 1
- Corsairs, xv. *See* Pirates
- Countess*, the, xxxi, *n.* 4
- Coxe, William, i, lvii, 103-4, 106-7, 334, 337-8
- Cruces, *see* Venta Cruces
- Cruz, Pedro de la, 101, 147
- Desaguadero, El, Horseley at, xlvii, 95-6; identified with San Juan River, 74, *n.* 4. *See also* Bocas del Drago
- Diablo Pass, 297, *n.* 1
- Diego, *cimarron*, xxxviii, 264, 269, 279; fort, xl, 126, *n.* 1, 279, *n.* 1, 281, 291; River, 279, 280
- Don de Dieu*, the, xxxiii
- Dragon*, the, xxiv, xxvi, 254
- Drake, Francis, vii, viii, ix, 245, 249-50, 331; activities in 1569, xxii-iv, xxvii; in 1570-1, xxiv-vii; in 1571, xxix-xxxvi; in 1572-3, xxxvii-xlv, lxiv, 42, *ns.* 3, 4, 54, *n.* 8, 57, *n.* 2, 74, *n.* 3, 126, *n.* 1, 170; association with Hawkins, xix-xxii, xxvi-vii, 253-4; communication from, 11, 14, 17, 26; cruelty, xxxv, 326; policy, xvii. *See also* Chagre River, *Cimarrones*, *Nombre de Dios*, *Sir Francis Drake Revived*, *Venta Cruces*, etc.
- Drake, John, xxxviii, xl, 254, 266, 269, 273-4, 279, 282, 292
- Drake, Joseph, xl, 293
- Drake, Robert, 292
- Drake, Sir Francis, Revived*, cited, vii, viii, xxiv, xxxvii-iii, xl, xlv, xlix; reprinted, 245-326
- Dutch in the Indies, xviii, 6
- Elizabeth, Queen, xvi-ii, xxxvi, xlv, *n.* 2
- Erasso, Cristóbal de, xlix, liii, lvi, 123, 128, 131, 140, 151, 161, 192; and García de Melo's expedition, lv, 144-5, 149, 160
- Erasso, Miguel de, lvi, 151, 152-3, 192-3, 201, 221
- Escudo de Veragua, El, 47, 79; John Noble at, xlv, 94; Oxenham at, 1, 100
- Fernandez Duro, Cesareo, cited, viii, xlii, *n.* 1, xlix, *n.* 1, 61, *n.* 1
- Fever, epidemic, xl, 291, 293
- Fleet system, Spanish, of trade control, xxviii-ix; foreign interference with, xxix-xxx
- Flores, Alvaro, 1, 44, 76, 78-80
- Flores de Valdés, Diego, xxii-iii, 7, 16, 48, 52, 82, 86, 88; commands, xxv, *n.* 2, xxix, xl, 31; despatches from, *see table of contents*; galleons discomfited,

- xxx-1, 18, 32, etc. (*see* Galleys); punitive expeditions, xxxii, n. 1, 4, 6, 11, 16, 18-19, 32, 44, 47, 66, 76, 78, 87, 109
- Francisca(o) River, *cimarrones* settled on, 235; Drake at, 60, n. 2, 61, 78, 260, 317-9, 321-2; Oxenham at, 170
- French, activities and policies, xvi, xviii, 331; Drake's association with, xxii-iv, xxxvi; in attack at Campos River, xliii-lv (*see* Testu, Le, Guillaume)
- Frias (Trejo), Diego de, 114, 135; campaign against Oxenham, lix-lxiii, 154-7, 162, 167-8, 178-83, 189, 191, 194-5, 200-3, 205-7, 211-31, 330-1; conflict with Loarte, 162-5, 184, 189; despatches from, *see table of contents*
- Froude, Anthony, viii
- Galleys, to protect the Main, lxiv, 19, 30, 50, 70, 109, 135, 139, 142, 165, 185-6, 203, 214, 221-2, 331; built in Nombre de Dios, 44, 315
- García de Melo, Luis, expedition to Acla, lv, lx, 134, 144-5, 149, 156, 159-61, 181, 187; to Puerto Bello, 165, 168, 185, 190, 204
- Garret, John, 256
- Golden Hind*, the, liii, lxiv
- Goodweather, John, *see* Bontemps, Jean
- Gourges, Dominique de, xvi
- Grace of God*, the, *see* *Don de Dieu*, the
- Green, William, xxxi, n. 4
- Guaras, Antonio de, xlvi, n. 3, xlix
- Guerre de Course*, xvi
- Hakluyt, Richard, *Principal Navigations*, cited, xx, n. 2, xliii, xlvi, liv, lvi-iii, 327, n. 1, 333
- Hakluyt Society's Publications, vii, ix, xv
- Harnao, corsair, xxiii, 7
- Hawkins, John, policy in the Indies, xv, xvi, xvii, n. 1; relations with Drake, xx-xxii, 253-4
- Hawkins, Mary S. W., *Plymouth Armada Heroes*, cited, xx, n. 1
- Hawkins, Richard, his *Observations*, ix, xlviii, lii, 339-41
- Hawkins, William, xvii, n. 4, xx, xxvi-vii, lxiv
- Hernandez, Portuguese pilot, 5, 8
- Hertford (?), Earl of, xxxvii, n. 1
- Hixom(n), Ellis, viii, xxxviii, 245, 269, 290, 294-5, 310
- Horseley, Gilbert, his voyage, xlvi-viii, 96-9
- Horsey, Sir Edward, 258
- Huguenots, *see* French
- Indios River, Frias Trejo and Ortega at, 179; Oxenham at, 172, 226
- Inquisition, Barker and, 1, 188, 204, 334
- Isle of Pines (Mainland coast), Canoa at, lxii; Drake at, xxxviii, 258, 269, 278, 281; Oxenham's vessels taken at, li, 126, n. 1
- Isles, Nicholas des, xviii, xxiii; design on Venta Cruces, xxxi, xxxiv, xliii
- Jamaica, xxxvii, 32, 326
- Jeffery's *West Indian Atlas*, xlvii, n. 2
- Jolis, corsair, xvi, n. 1, xxiii
- Judith*, the, xxxiv
- Kingsley, Charles, *Westward Ho*, cited, lii
- La Guanaja, 74; Barker's expedition at, lvii, 196-7, 208, 337
- La Margarita, Barker at, 335; fisheries endangered, 6
- Larder(er), Louis, xvii, n. 1, xlvii, n. 3
- Laudonnière, René, return to Normandy with prize, xxxi, n. 4
- Laurens, Lores, Jacques, 83, 87
- L'Esperance*, the, xxxi
- Lion*, the, 292, 294
- Loarte, Gabriel de, liv, 112, 132, 134, 136; conflict with viceroys and Frias Trejo, lix, lx, 168, 184, 224-5; death of, lxiii; despatches from, *see table of contents*. *See also* Frias Trejo, Diego; García de Melo, Luis; Ortega Valencia, Pedro



- Lopez, Diego, lvii, 74, *n.* 5; despatches from, *see table of contents*
- Lopez Vaz, ix, xliii, xlviii, liv, 327-31. *See* Vaez, Antonio
- Lovell, John, xvii, *n.* 3, xix, 253
- Luther, Martin, Lutherans, xviii, 6, *n.* 1, 16, 24, 31, 48, 95, 99, 109, 111, 113, 116-7, 120, 122, 137, 144, 147, 154, 158, 205
- Luxan, Francisco de, xlix, lvi, 159
- Maese Fernando, 11, *n.* 1
- Magdalena River (Rio Grande), 7; Drake at, xxxix, 274, 275-7, 288, 323-5
- Mandinga, Anton, 217, 240
- Mandinga, Pedro, xxxi, *n.* 4, xl, 16, 297, 303, 305, 320, 324
- 'Maroons, *see* Cimarrones
- Marquez, Luis, xlvii, 94-5
- Melo, Baltazar de, robbed of merchandise, xxxi-iv, 15, 18, 22, 32, 114, 145
- Melo, Captain, *see* García de Melo, Luis
- Menéndez de Avilés, Pedro, conduct in Florida, xvi, xxxv, 134; corsairs inquire for, 5; defends Saint Augustine, xxxvii, 37-9; galleons, xxii, xxv and *n.* 2, xxix, 63; his titles, 6, *n.* 1; vessel taken, xxii, 7, 16
- Menéndez Marqués, Pedro, 153
- Mestran (Oxenham?), 74, *n.* 3
- Miguel Angel, General, liii, *n.* 3, 112, 115
- Minion*, the, 74, *n.* 3, 291, 313
- Moone, Thomas, 272
- Mora, Judge, *see* Rodriguez de Mora, Juan
- Mulatas Archipelago, *see* Cativas, the
- Narvaéz de Padilla, Gerónimo, xxxi, *n.* 3, xliii, *n.* 2, 19, 32
- Nepeville, corsair, xxii, *n.* 3, xxiii
- Nicaragua, menaced by Horseley, xlvii, 95; vessels from, taken, 21, 47, 74, 124, 136, 148, 152, 188, 314, 326. *See* Desaguadero, El
- Nichols, Philip, vii, xxxvii, 245
- Nipontville, corsair, 7
- Noble, John, his expedition, xviii, xlv-vi, 74, *n.* 5, 93, 94
- Nombre de Dios, Drake's attack on, xxxvii-viii, 41, 42, 47-8, 54, 56-9, 64, 72, 255, 258-67; on pack-train near, *see* Campos River; endangered, defended, etc., 30, 41, 46, 50, 55, 62-6, 69, 81-2, 84-5, 110, 116, 124-5, 148, 152, 258-9, 325-6; importance in Spanish trade system, xxviii-xxx; taxed, 10, 17, 33-4, 140
- Nuttall, Zelia, *New Light on Drake*, cited, lxiii, *n.* 2
- Oars, *see* Rowing vessels
- Orange, Prince of, 6
- Ortega, Pedro de, stream so named, 132
- Ortega Valencia, Pedro de, 34; despatches from, *see table of contents*; expedition against Oxenham, liii-v, lix, lxi, 112, 116, 129-31, 132-5, 138, 140, 142, 150-1, 155, 160, 173-5, 178-9, 181, 205, 220, 224, 235, 238, 328-30, 340
- Ortiz de Zarate, Juan, xxxii, *n.* 1, 21
- Osua, Pedro de, expedition against *cimarrones*, 10, 216
- Overy, John, 258
- Oxenham, John, described, 112-13; association with Drake, xxxvii, xli, 74, *n.* 5, 265-6, 285-6, 300, 303, 313, 322; captured, 169, 181, 203, 226, 232-4; depositions, 169-77, 232-4; executed, lxiii, 341; expedition, xlviii-lv, lix-lxiv, 110-12, 115-22, 126-47, 149-51, 154-57, 159-61, 166-8, 178-85, 187, 189-91, 194-5, 200-3, 205-7, 211-34, 236-41, 327-31, 339-41; removed to Lima, *see* Toledo, Don Francisco de; route to Vallano, vii
- Panama, city of, realm, despatches from, *see table of contents*; endangered, 62, 66, 69, 110, 116, 125, 135, 138-9, 147-8, 165-6; importance of, in Spanish trade system, xxviii-ix, 31; taxed, 33, 34, 140; threatened by Oxenham, lii, 113
- Parcar (Parker? Porter?), William, 169, 177

- Pascha*, the (*Pasco*?), 254
- Pearl Islands, raided by Oxenham, lii, 111, 115, 117-22, 128, 137, 154, 172-3, 178, 218, 220, 223, 229, 327-8, 339; second raid projected, lxi, 160-1, 167, 226, 240
- Pedro, *cimarron*, *see* Mandinga, Pedro (and Anton?)
- Peru, expedition from, against Oxenham, requested by Loarte, lix, 111; by city of Panama, 148, 154; resented by Loarte, etc., *see* Loarte, Gabriel de, conflict with viceroy; *see also* Frias Trejo, Diego; trade to and from, and realm endangered, 4, 16, 25, 31, 34, 49, 52, 73; by Oxenham, 135, 138, 142, 145-6, 166; *see also* Miguel Angel, General; viceroy of, *see* Toledo, Don Francisco de
- Peso*, valued, 3
- Philip II, King, xvi, xlv, *n.* 2
- Pinas, Pinos, harbour, 126, *n.* 1. *See* Xerenxeren River
- Pines Island, *see* Isle of Pines
- Pirates, defined, xvii; French, first in the Indies, xviii; identification of, xviii; methods of, xxx, 222
- Port Pheasant, Drake at, 40, *n.* 2, 255
- Port Plenty, *see* Isle of Pines
- Portuguese slave-traders, xviii
- Puerto Caballos, Coxé pursued by Spaniards from, lviii; Horseyley threatens, xlviii, 98; warned, 75, 97, 208
- Ragged Staff*, the, i, lvi, 333, 335, 338
- Ranse, James, joins Drake, xxxvii, 57, *n.* 2, 258-9; withdraws, xxxviii, 270
- Ribaut, Jean, xvi, *n.* 1, xxxi, *n.* 4, 134
- Rinconchalón, *see* Ronconchalón
- Rio Diablo Pass, xl, *n.* 1
- Rio Grande, *see* Magdalena River
- Roche, Philip, i, lvii, 103-4, 106-7; 334-6, 338
- Rodriguez de Mora, Juan, lvi, 153, 161, 188, 192, 336
- Ronconchalón, lx, lxi, 169, 171-2, 176, 179, 180, 189, 194, 226, 297; destroyed by García de Melo, 180, 187
- Rowing vessels, importance of, 16-19, 166
- Saint Augustine, Florida, attack on, xxxvii, 37, 39
- San Juan de Ulua, battle, effect of, xvii, xx, xxxiii, 253
- San Juan River, *see* Desaguadero, El
- San Miguel, *real* or headquarters, lxi, 179, 189, 202, 215, 217, 225, 228, 229
- Santa Marta, 7, 32, 40 and *n.* 1, 41; Drake at, xxxix, *n.* 2, xl, 288-90
- Sardinilla Inlet, Drake at, 60, *n.* 2, 61, 78, 82
- Sasardi Pass, li, *n.* 7
- Sea, North and South, defined, 3
- Seely, Christopher, viii, 245
- Settlement, foreign, on isthmus, feared, 49, 66, 113, 125, 130; Spanish, urged, 9, 135, 139, 166
- Sores, Jacques, xxxi, *n.* 4
- Strozzi, Philip, xxxii, *n.* 316
- Stukeley, Thomas, xxvii, *n.* 1
- Sylvester, Captain, xlv
- Swan*, the, xxiv, xxvi, xxxiv, 254, 272-4
- Testu, Le, Giraud, xxxi, *n.* 4
- Testu, Le, Guillaume, xvi, xviii, xxxi, *n.* 4; association with Drake, xliii, 76, 316-17; death of, xlv, 60, 73, 83, 86, 88-91; 318, 322
- Tetu, Captain, *see* Testu, Le, Guillaume
- Tevez, Diego de, 65
- Tierra Firme, kingdom of, defined, 4, *n.* 2
- Toledo, Don Francisco de, lix, 7, 9, 169; demands Oxenham, etc., 218, 220, 230; despatches to, *see table of contents*. *See also* Frias Trejo, Diego de; Loarte, Gabriel de
- Tolu, lvi, 16, 32, 148, 158, 188, 192, 236, 278, 282, 294, 335; taken, xxii, 8, 22
- Trade, xv. *See* Antilles, trade of, affected; Chagre River, traffic on, significance of interference with; Peru, trade to and from

- Trejo, Esteban de, xli, 9-10, 33  
 Trexo, Esteban de, *see* Trejo, Esteban de  
 Trinidad, Barker's expedition at, 1, 335  
 Trujillo, 74; Barker's head displayed at, 197; Coxe and, lix, 337; threatened by Horseley, xlviii  
 Turbilla, Captain, xxxi  
 Tutila, Captain, *see* Testu, Le, Guillaume  
 Vaez, Antonio, ix, 74. *See* Lopez Vaz  
 Vallano, negroes of, relations with Oxenham and Spanish campaign against, *see* Frias Trejo, Diego de; García de Melo, Luis; Mandinga, Anton and Pedro; Ortega Valencia, Pedro de; Vaquero, Juan, etc.  
 Vallano, Old, raid on, lxii, 216, 229; Arana at, 227  
 Vaquero, Juan, xl, n. 3, lxi, 118, 121, n. 1, 172, 205, 227  
*Vecino(s)*, translation of word, 4, n. 1  
 Velasco de Barrio, Juan, 203, n. 1, 212, 221  
 Venta Cruces, described, xxviii, 3, 269, 307-8; Drake's attack on wharf of, xxv, 22-3, 24; on station of, vii, xlii, 45-7, 49, 52, 72, 109, 291, n. 1, 294-309; French attempt on, xxxi, 16; importance in Spanish trade system, xxix. *See also* Chagre River, *Cimarrones*, etc.  
 Veragua, 17; Barker attempts, lvi, 147-8, 151, 158, 161, 188, 204, 336; Drake approaches, xxiii, xliii, 21, 74-6, 312-15; Horseley at, xlvii-viii, 95-6, 99; John Noble at, xlvii-iii, 92, 94; Sylvester's attack on, xlv, 94-5; threatened, 8, 22, 79-80, 127, 152; traffic interrupted, 110, 124  
 Vique, Thomas, 74, n. 5  
 Williamson, James A., cited, ii, ix, xvii, n. 3, xviii, xx, n. 3, xxi, xxvi, n. 1, xlvii-ii, xlviii, n. 3, 98, n. 2  
 Winter, William, xvii, xxxvi  
 Xerenxeren River, li, 126, n. 1, 171  
 Yaviza, xlii, n. 2, liv, n. 4

